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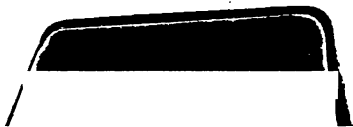
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# THE EERIE LAIRD:

BEING

THE ONLY AUTHENTIC HISTORY OF THE PERSON  
SO CALLED BY TRADITION IN SCOTLAND;

AND OF THE

REMARKABLE PARTS ENACTED BY HIM AND  
OTHER EUROPEAN ADVENTURERS

IN

THE EAST INDIES,

DURING THE CIVIL WARS, FOR THE

THRONE OF THE GREAT MOGUL,

ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF THE

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.



LONDON:

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1848.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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I, JAMES KIRKLAND, Weaver, and dealer in Grocery Goods at the Manse Green of Gowandale, am he who hath written this true history of the EERIE LAIRD, from the dictation of a being not come of the seed of Adam.

All men in Strathclyde know the Castle of Dalbracken in its desolation. Though the battlements thereof, still hanging as they seem in the air, are beheld afar off, the fox lately had his den in the narrow stair that once led to its ramparts, and I have seen bats issuing from its donjon at twilight. The ruins are covered with moss and ivy, while ferns grow abundantly on what were of old the pleasant lawns around the forsaken abode, even as they grew before it became a habitation of the great. Verily, men believe that a destroying curse fell on it, and on the neighbouring mansion of Duncogle, because of the wickedness of the last Laird of the ancient race in each. Their forbidden deeds were done in a distant land, so that the people of Gowandale knew little, but talked much of the fearful nature thereof. Being from my youth upwards smitten with a fondness surpassing the love of women for stories of wonder, which, though peradventure idle, are not sinful, I had oftimes in vain sought more full tidings than local traditions,

preserved of Malcolm and Gilbert, the sons of perdition born in our own parish. More eagerly did I thirst for knowledge concerning the last off-shoot of the Dalbrackens, even the Eerie Laird, seeing that the brother of my forefather, being his servitor, accompanied him to the East Indies, and was a Captain of the host where his master reigned as King. Now it came to pass that Captain Kylesmuir, who is of the present race in the modern residence called Dalbracken House, returned recently with the loss of his right arm in battle, from the countries of the East, where Malcolm, the relative of his ancestor, to gain countless wealth, committed those murders, at the recital of which our village children tremble, as they sit by the fire-side in winter nights. I longed to renew acquaintance with the Captain, whom I had not met since he was a fair-haired boy, when I taught him the mystery of curling on the ice. Having to carry a web, woven with my hands, to the said house, I girt up my loins, taking the load on my back, in hopes of finding opportunity to hold pleasing discourse with that man of war, on things seen in his travels; more especially what he had gathered respecting the last owner of the Castle, on the very field of his exploits. In these hopes disappointment was my lot. The traveller had gone from home, to ramble none knew whither. I went alone through the wood to the falling Castle, to dwell in secret on the tales relating thereto. It was a fine summer day, the 5th of June, of this year of grace 1821. Yet a creeping and a coldness descended along my back bone, whilst I passed the crumbling peel and empty halls, which unearthly creatures are said to inhabit after dark. But on reaching the great Yew Tree, beneath which Pedden, Cameron, and Renwick, had preached, I sat down in the Prophet's chair as a place

of safety from the powers of darkness. Here Charters of the Barons were dated of old, and Ministers of the Word held forth to scattered remnants in the bloody persecution of them who maintained the Covenant. No longer in bodily fear, I gazed on apartments open to the sky, which were reared to shelter chiefs and damsels in their days of pride, and recalled what was delivered down regarding the mighty but unhappy men whose souls, like their bodies and the line of their fathers, had perished forever on this spot. The fathers of Malcolm and Gilbert, rising in arms against the King, had been deprived of their wealth as the punishment of rebellion. They hired a learned Magician to teach their sons the black art in this very Castle, in order that the young men might use it to restore their families to riches and honour. When they were well instructed, the Prince and Power of the Air provided them with trumpets of the metal of his nether realm, from whence at the will of the youths a terrible voice issued, whereat the walls of cities fell to the ground, and the inhabitants yielded up their treasures. The Evil One, bestowing store of glamour, spells, and philters on his disciples, transported them in a blast from the north to the kingdoms of the great Mogul, where gold is plentiful as stones in the brook. There, by diabolical means, the young Lairds ransacked many towns of precious things; and making themselves to appear of rare comeliness in the eyes of women, heathen queens and princesses loaded with jewels, ran into their arms, even as mice into the trap. Of these ladies, the Necromancers made the most beautiful wives and concubines; and hoarding the gems of all in spacious coffers, smote the rest under the fifth rib. Both finally returned home. Gilbert became a persecutor of God's people, and was stricken by their weapons of the flesh. Malcolm, living

in the solitude of his Castle, felt the pricking of conscience for his sins, and in atonement protected the hunted preachers and their flocks from the men of blood. Yet was his life dreary and frightful. The ghosts of his victims filled the glen with their shrieks at midnight; and their foreign garments of white were seen waving over the Castle spotted with blood. On account of these visions and his lonesome ways, men called Malcolm *The Eerie Laird*, which is his ordinary name to this day. Demons too, it was said, watched his steps. The only good being of the spiritual world which haunted him was the Brownie of Dalbracken.

This lost man, when young and innocent, had loved a daughter of Duncogle, and his affection continued through a life of reprobation. But the breath of the fiend having seasoned him for wrath even as turpentine prepares the taper for burning, he could not take that damsel to his bosom lest he should sear her, seeing that she would not renounce her baptism. The Eerie Laird therefore died without seed, bequeathing his land to her whom his soul loved in youth, and she to her lover's kinsman the first of the Kylesmuirs.

Malcolm and Gilbert, where they had played in boyhood, died side by side at the same moment in that room which now bears nettles on its floor and cobwebs on its broken walls. When their hour came, both lay down on golden couches, whilst the faces of eastern sultans stared upon them from above. As the last breath was passing from them, Satan appeared in the shape of a woman in black raiment, and snatching the souls of his disciples from their lips, bore them off to his place, in sight of the household of Dalbracken.

Thinking of the awful visitants of this spot, I now cast up mine eyes to ejaculate thanks for my safety, when, with

horror and amaze I beheld the face of one sorely sun-burnt hanging over me from a high seat on the opposite side of the Yew Tree.—“James Kirkland,” said the apparition, in a mild human voice, “I have particular business with you, and rejoice that we meet here where nobody is likely to interrupt us.” Not doubting that the speaker was Beelzebub come up to purchase my poor soul, I trembled at the mention which he made of business in this place. I tried to pray for strength to withstand temptation; but verily the tongue cleft to the roof of my mouth. Faith failed me, and I would have bounded away like a young roe, had not my limbs shaken under me so that I could not stretch them forth. “Why, James,” again said the creature laughing, “what is the matter? You sit quaking like an aspen in a calm, when there is nothing to disturb an honest man. Are you really the same bold fellow who twenty years ago subscribed to fight the expected French invaders *with a sling and a stone from the brook, as David the son of Jesse met the Philistine?*”—“I am always strong in the Lord,” quoth I, in a quavering voice; “and in his name I bid thee depart!” As this conjurement ought to have remitted a foul fiend to the bottomless pit, my terror began to abate when I saw that he sat still. “Take courage, man,” cried the strange being; “such an opportunity of hearing the true and complete history of the Eerie Laird may never occur to you again. No mortal can tell you so much of him and his race as I: which you will readily believe when told that I belonged to the house of Dalbracken for six hundred years.” At these words my jaws clattered aloud, and my legs were once more seized with tremor. “Knowing you to be the best penman in the parish,” continued he, “I want you to write down to my dictation an account of what the noted Malcolm and

Gilbert really were and did : but unless we can stop this renewed ague fit, I fear you will make but an indifferent manuscript.—Look up, James Kirkland, and recognise a hundred descriptions of me : am I not *Jock in the Plaid*, the Brownie of Dalbracken ?” I cast up mine eyes, yet in dread, to discover whether his scull and nether part were smooth. Seeing no signs of darkness thereon, methought the lowland bonnet and gray plaid which he wore gave him a look of honesty. His neighbourly appearance inspiring confidence, I thanked him for his intended kindness. “I am glad to find your composure and curiosity returning,” rejoined the Brownie. “Much of that domestic industry of which I was a guardian spirit being now happily carried on by inanimate machines, I am set at liberty to attend to the mental labour of men like you. The introduction of the schoolmaster in the seventeenth century rendering me dispensable in this glen, I accompanied the heir of Dalbracken to preside invisibly over his household in distant regions, where I witnessed every act in his career, and saw through the men and women with whom he was associated in great affairs, as if their breasts had been of glass. I must prepare you, however, to dismount from the stilts on which your imagination has hitherto run after the fame of the Eerie Laird, and of Gilbert, who was his companion at home and rival abroad. They were no magicians ; but men of extraordinary fortune, who acted a distinguished part in the war and politics of India, at what was perhaps the most interesting period of its history. Imperfect information respecting them, and utter ignorance of the scene on which they shone, have led their countrymen in indulging a love of the marvellous and supernatural, to turn what they heard of the ‘doomed Laird’ into a wild sort of allegory of the truth. My narrative will bring you

to plain facts : sometimes revealing good qualities of high order, sometimes disclosing actions wonderful and bad enough, though not traceable directly to the devil. My authority, it is needless to say, is paramount to the guesses and assertions of mere mortals who have already attempted to record the events which I shall relate. It will afford me satisfaction, however, to confirm all the material circumstances known to them while I supply important defects. Their errors have arisen chiefly from confounding the Scottish adventurers with individuals of the crowd of foreigners then serving the great Mogul and his viceroys : so that they who originated and conducted the leading measures of the time, are either passed over unnoticed, or mistaken for contemporary Asiatics bearing names like those which the youths from Gowandale assumed in the East. The history which I mean to indite, shall be the property of the copyist : who may read it at home, expound it to the literary club of the parish, or sell the work to any bookseller who will buy it."

"Mr Brownie," said I, now afraid of nothing : "I am your man. Lo ! here is a quire of the paper called foolscap which I bootlessly took to Dalbracken house for sale, and here is an ink-horn with pens also. Let us begin !"—"Pshah !" answered he, "who ever *mistered* a brownie before ? Call me *Jock*, honest man."—"Well, good Jock, since I may be so free, seeing that the men and women of my house have always spoken the truth, I trust you will eschew the failing of them that travel into far countries, lest I be accused of bringing forth a book of lies. Remember ye likewise, that being but a sinful old weaver of fifty and six years, speaking broad Scots and writing simple English, I am not cunning in those foreign tongues wherewith the written language of the realm is often mixed to the confusion of plain readers.



There is one sort of speech in especial which men of war and they from great towns speak through the nostrils as with a small trumpet of brass, which sorely perplexes a poor man ; verily, I know not the spelling thereof. Furthermore, how can I hope to put the names of eastern men and things on paper which the organs of no home-bred Christian can pronounce ?"—“Never fear, James ; every word which I say to you shall be in conformity with the laws of the Creator, which men can neither falsify nor change. I dislike polyglot scribes as much as you ; and shall confine myself to one language, with such rare exceptions that they will cause no inconvenience to you. I will, besides, shew you from time to time how to make the orthography of oriental words correspond as much as possible to the sound. General rules do not seem to answer. Now that the faculty of speech has fairly returned to you, pray do not let it overflow to interrupt my dictation, but always go on quietly to the end of each Chapter, when whatever is obscure shall be explained. Finally, I would warn you not to be impatient for the disclosures of our history. You may feel like the young Cadets of these days, who think the making of the large fortunes for which they go out, cruelly postponed during five dull months which the voyage to India occupies before they get sight of the land yielding spontaneous harvests of rupees. The first three or four Chapters, though intimately connected with the sequel, are merely an introduction to what you are probably desirous of knowing all about immediately.

“Meanwhile, I have to observe that it is not falsehood with which you are most likely to be charged. People unable to test past history by its conformity to universal truths, always think new accounts of old events parodies on recent

transactions with which they are familiar. Such shallow persons may imagine that the descriptions which I give of battles and political measures, contain reflections on some modern battles and politics. Rest assured that I am no dealer in copied pictures of individual men and things of these times. If aught uncomplimentary in our work apply to any particular occurrence of the 18th or 19th centuries, it will do so just as a cloud may be very like a whale, not by design, but by chance."



**THE EERIE LAIRD.**



# THE EERIE LAIRD.

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## CHAPTER I.

BETWEEN the battle of Worcester and the Restoration in 1660, Scotland was more depressed than at any other period of her history. A small proportion of the gentry and people, rejoicing in the overthrow of the royal authority, which they had reason to call tyranny, were well pleased to form part of a British Republic. But the majority of Scotsmen of all classes, indignant at the loss of their national independence, prayed and plotted to reinstate the descendant of their ancient kings. Yet so divided were the different parties among them concerning the restrictions which ought to be imposed on his prerogative, that they could not concur in a united movement against the Protectorate.

The only Scottish Republican whom Cromwell liked or trusted, was Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, the originator of the famous Covenant, who had become successively a Judge of the Court of Session in Edinburgh and latterly a member of the Council of State in London. If not an immaculate character, he was not the worst of his time. As first law officer in 1650, he had proclaimed Charles the Second King of Scotland : and though disgusted with the shameless want of political and moral principle which the young man soon evinced after unadvisedly returning to claim his throne, he adhered to him until his cause seemed abandoned by the nation. Having in vain done his best to make feudal monarchy consistent with popular liberty, according to the doctrines enunciated by Buchanan in

classical Latin, and preached by Knox in the homely vernacular, Johnston was willing to try what a commonwealth, without Princes and Nobles, might do for a country peculiarly ill treated by both, which owed whatever it had worth possessing to an energetic people. This gentleman, by the usual courtesy styled Lord Warriston (as a Senator of the College of Justice), acting liberally towards dissentients in faith and politics, was, while Oliver ruled, considered the general patron of Scotsmen in England. One day after fatiguing himself with reading long official papers all docketed "Scotland," with such abstracts of the contents as, "Insurrection threatened in the western counties:" "Disaffection in the Lothians:" "Amercements on Estates:" "Sale of prisoners of war to the Plantations:" and so forth, the councillor of state, stretching his limbs, walked across the room in quest of relaxation and more agreeable thoughts, when he saw from the window three persons about to knock at his street door. The principal figure of the group he knew to be Mr William Kylesmuir, a prosperous Scottish merchant of the City, and the other two were raw looking young men evidently from beyond the Tweed. "More petitioners for abatements of fines," said Lord Warriston to himself: "but before hearing these unfledged suitors, I must learn something of them and their affairs." A servant entering to announce the visitors, received orders to admit Mr Kylesmuir alone. The man of business making respectful obeisance to the man in office, was very cordially received. On being asked what news he had from the north, the merchant intimated that the young Lairds of Dalbracken and of Duncogle, in Strathclyde, were in attendance to wait on his Lordship. "Dalbracken and Duncogle!" rejoined the other, with the air of one in whom the names excited particular interest,— "Why, what has become of the *moral training* which was to last till the majority of both heirs? I had a full account of it from Duncogle, who was obliged to let your kinsman, Dalbracken, have his way. The two youths were to be set agoing in the paths of pure morality and the manners of high life, without future power of deviation, by being kept uninformed of whatever is wicked and

low-bred in the world. They were, at the same time, to receive the best attainable education in Dalbracken Castle, restricted from ever passing the bounds of Gowandale parish, to prepare them for their special destiny, which is to retrieve the fortunes of their families by leaving home at last, and coming back exceeding rich: not forgetting a solemn vow of celibacy to continue till both patrimonies have been redeemed. Well, you see, I know much about them: how has the plan succeeded with your young friends?"—"The 'training,'" answered Kylesmuir, "has, I believe, been interrupted, and cut short by a year or two. In short, the lads, without leave, fell in love; and to prevent their marrying too, they have been sent hither, in hopes that you will find them suitable employment."—"Ha!" resumed Wariston, "no mortal who knows his fellow-creatures could expect a better result to the scheme. But more of this anon. You must know, Mr Kylesmuir, I was once intimate with both the fathers of these striplings, and have often thought of them with concern since our national troubles and changes began. Never were two men more different; and their ancestors are said to have been as unlike as they. Yet an hereditary friendship has long subsisted between the families, faithful to which, I know Dalbracken now upholds his neighbour in adversity."—"Your Lordship is right," rejoined the other: "each was deprived of half his estate by the Protector, and they would have been equally destitute had the repute of their forefathers been alike. Nobody will trust Duncogle; Dalbracken may have any loan which his pride allows him to ask. Hence his ability to supply wherewithal to maintain both houses in decency, as well as to educate and equip the boys."—"A fine illustration of the value of a good name," observed the councillor. "I remember the current sayings in Strathclyde, which mark the opinion entertained of the Laids for generations past. When a man means to insist emphatically on ready money or undoubted security, he says (or used to say) *the king's coin or Dalbracken's word*. To the other race the byword is less complimentary. One over clever at a bargain is commended as 'fit to take in a Vulpine.' Walter Vulpine of Duncogle was my fellow



student of law, which, like many of our landed men, he affected to study without intending to practise. I tried to make him take the wisest course left to us, and he did so in the first instance. After getting creditably through our original crusade against misgovernment and Prelacy, from Marston to Philliphaugh, he might have reposed on his laurels, and perhaps finally obtained his reward. But with the cunning of his race, he attempted covertly to propitiate both parties, until it could be known which would gain the ascendant. Duncogle, justly imagining that a sum of money would be more acceptable to the young king than his personal attendance, he beggared himself to send a present to Scone, accompanied with a most loyal letter, which his Majesty's travelling secretary was conjured to read to him, and then very carefully burn. In spite of this injunction, however, the fatal document was captured among the royal baggage, and returned to the author, with an order to pay a moiety of the market price of his land within six weeks, or forfeit the whole. Dalbracken, again, is the model of a country gentleman: and though simple as a child in this world's ways, his intentions are always consistent and high minded. I should be proud to serve such a man, and might, if he would but see his own and our country's interest. Meanwhile, his conspicuous service at Worcester in the worn-out Royal cause is sufficient to make him a marked man under the Commonwealth. His charge, that of a Patriarch at the head of mounted shepherds and husbandmen, was the theme of admiration among his enemies. After the town had been taken, a party of Ironsides advanced with the view of intercepting the king's retreat, when Dalbracken and his troop attacking them in front at full gallop, arrested their progress, till Charles, escaping by St Martin's gate, got out of reach. The Laird's eldest son, a fine youth of nineteen, was slain while spurring his charger through the ranks that opposed him. The victors carried his body to their General, that the sight of it might enhance the merit of conquering such foes as it represented. Dalbracken's own horse being shot under him, he must have died or surrendered, had not Dick *Steelbow*, the king's Rough Rider, remounted him on a large

black one, of his master's stud : and as the only acknowledgment in his power, the good Laird made his preserver Lieutenant of the rallying troop on the spot. Kylesmuir here interposing, said, that though the disasters of the day separated them immediately, never to meet again, his kinsman remembered the Rough Rider with lasting gratitude, and, still using the horse, called him *Steelbow*, in honour of the gallant and humble youth.

Without further noticing the reciprocation of question and reply as the conversation continued respecting the young gentlemen of Strathclyde, and the manner in which their parents qualified them to perform their parts in life, I will give in my own words the substance of what the Merchant communicated to the Statesman on the subject, and a little more for general information.

The Laird of Dalbracken, returning from Worcester, dismayed at the fate of his country and the dethronement of the line of Fergus, felt sadly humiliated by the poverty which he was reduced to, while his pride became more sensitive than in palmy days. Delicacy kept back the aid of some : but Kylesmuir, with the privilege of a second cousin, relieved his embarrassments by a most acceptable offer to advance the amount of the heavy fine inflicted on him for serving the "tyrant's son : " and was in return spontaneously presented with a mortgage for the money on the remaining property of his relative. This estate, a vast extent of land, which might have been more valuable if situated in Middlesex, was the gift of one of the early Scottish kings to a remote ancestor of the family, who, in the opinion of the present proprietor, had incurred on behalf of his posterity an imprescriptible obligation of allegiance to the progeny of the donor, from which no misconduct on the part of any living sovereign could absolve them.

In this spirit, Dalbracken understanding the declaration of the Estates of Scotland and Warriston's advice in their literal (not political) sense, fought at Marston to drive wicked ministers from the counsels of Charles the First, without once intending to injure or even offend royalty. Deceived by those oracles then, he would not trust them a second time :

but resolved to act exclusively on his own judgment in remaining loyal to the scion of Canmore, in upholding the honour of his house, and in taking the measures which were to enable his surviving son to restore it to wealth.

Being deep read in genealogy, the Laird formed an unalterable opinion on the facts which his favourite studies disclosed, that the ultimate decline and fall of Baronial families was never attributable to political misfortunes, such as had overtaken him, but to the degenerate weakness of modern heirs in choosing wives or marrying untimely for love, in dereliction of the sacred duty of keeping their possessions entire, and preserving the purity of ancient blood. It appeared to this good man no less than impious in gentle folks of either sex to forego the dignity with which Providence had blessed them, and contract marriages with plebeians for the sake of lucre, beauty, or aught which the commonalty may possess. He had arguments to demonstrate that the lapse to plebeianism of races once illustrious, nay, the ruin of the kingdom, was traceable to the deplorable practice of allowing young people of all grades and both sexes to meet, dance, even eat together, at certain rural festivals: whence the highborn, like hounds losing scent of the stag in a herd of cattle, lost the perception which it behoved them to have of that indescribable excellence which belongs to aristocrats born, and which they ought to be distinguished by among persons equal to them in nothing but dress, manners, and education. He resolved accordingly that his son and daughter should be brought up as such children were wont, before the times of derogation, in their father's castle, where, though he could not afford them the means of holding intercourse with others of their own class, they should neither see nor be seen by persons of inferior birth on terms of equality. Here no object could meet their eyes to awaken the deprecated thought of matrimony: but to make surety double sure, the young ones were sworn, on attaining a dangerous age, not to dream of wedlock till the Barony should be redeemed. Dalbracken, fortunately for his heir, took his notions of education, not from the Baronage but the Clergy of his country, and prepared to give the youngster a very complete

one, including literature, philosophy, and science, which the anxious parent deemed besides a sort of case hardening to virtue, a universal net by which fortune, whatever shape she took, must be caught. Engaging a tutor and governess to act under his own eye, he did unto Duncogle as he would be done unto, inviting him, who likewise had a son and daughter about the age of the young Dalbrackens, to let them share the benefit of his system of tuition and moral training.

The objection to this arrangement which at first presented itself, was obviated by the ingenuity of the benevolent proposer. To guard against the possibility of a youthful Dalbracken and Vulpine thinking of inter-marriage, they were made with interesting formality to embrace one another as brothers and sisters, a relationship which, every child is aware, can never become conjugal.

The girls had thus a fair prospect of dying old maids, in honour of their respected lineage, without ever having an opportunity to resist temptation; but the boys were destined at twenty-one to go "forth of Scotland," make a great deal of money honourably, and return to pay off the incumbrances on their respective inheritances. How or where this great work was to be accomplished, the Laird did not explain or inquire. It was sufficient, he said, to know the indisputable fact, that lads far inferior to what his pupils were by birth, and would be in knowledge and learning, had gone abroad poor, and come back wealthy. Who dared to suppose that the heirs of Dalbracken and Duncogle had not ability to do that which the sons of common people had achieved?

The Vulpines, not less vain than their neighbours were proud, treated his plan of educating and training young gentlemen with secret derision. Longing impatiently for whatever the world praised, and disdainful of everything not in the direct road to vulgar greatness, they scorned book learning, and sorely regretted that their "fine boy" should be condemned to waste his time in pursuits worthy only of a Dominic or minister of the Gospel. It was their anxious wish to get him employment under Cromwell in his sixteenth year; but the purse-holder's horror of the usurna-

tion deterred them from pressing for his consent ; and unable to make draft or bond bring gold without Dalbracken's signature, they submitted in silent agony to his crotchets. Yet the steady progress of the children in all branches of education was, meanwhile, highly satisfactory to their judicious well wishers. The instructors were, it so happened, happily chosen. The governess, widow of a clergyman, had seen better days, and lived in the world. The governor or tutor, Mr Wylie, while studying for the ministry of the Kirk, had at the same time qualified for a degree in physic. To superior understanding and acquirements, this gentleman added the rare attributes of zeal and skill in imparting knowledge. He pleased his employers, though Dalbracken had to lament one defect in his judgment ; and this was the entertainment of doubts, regarding the suitableness of the moral training which the boys and girls were undergoing. When closetted and gravely interrogated on the subject by Dalbracken, Mr Wylie diffidently but freely questioned the policy of excluding young men from practical acquaintance with the mass of mankind, in communion and in competition with whom they were one day to work their way to fortune. The ideas of all the children, forced to dwell unvaryingly on one set of objects, might become too strongly concentrated on them, and adapted too exclusively to the few things they saw. He observed further, that artificial barriers to implanted feelings always awakened a desire to overleap them. Providence, said he, which endues the heart of man with love of woman, directs salutary restriction to be imposed on it by marriage. Human art cannot by rules command, or by promises extinguish, the innate passion for a season, to suit temporary convenience. By forbidding wedlock, and the hope of possessing a single chosen object, you take away the ordained limitation to the instinctive craving of youth, and may render it promiscuous and licentious.

The worthy Laird approved of the moral tone of his monitor. Yet suspicious of reasoning which he could not comprehend in its full scope, and wont to dispose of it in the category of things to be dreaded, called theory, he made no offensive reply, but resolved within himself, that though

learned in two faculties, Mr Wylie was unfortunately born too low to be capable of appreciating the measures required to preserve the mysterious something which distinguishes aristocrats from the vulgar.

The eldest of the young Dalbrackens was Maude, a girl of timid manners which appeared cold, with elegant tastes, and a peculiarly sensitive heart. Her only surviving brother Malcolm, afforded grounds for doubting whether he ought to be called good, bad, fierce or wild, quick or dull, idle or studious. He was in truth one of those who, having more enjoyment in using the reflective faculties than the outward senses, often retired within himself to think, leaving observers to call him stupid, because then regardless of them and their doings. But when tired of dwelling on his own thoughts or of self-imposed studies, the youth's limbs and external organs seemed to make up for occasional dormancy, by intense and troublesome activity. With much of his sister's temperament, he was keenly alive to impressions of love and hate; but, unlike her, who confided unreservedly in friends, Malcolm disdained to lean on others, even his dearest relatives, for counsel or support. From infancy regarding his father's injunctions with blind respect, he continued to feel their influence through life, without subjecting them to the test of reason.

The paternal behests of the Laird of Dalbracken, to his own and his adopted son, with variations for each, will be best made known by a specimen of "the solemn declaration and promise" which they had to sign and seal, after reading with emphasis on their fourteenth and every subsequent birth-day while under tuition.

"I Malcolm Dalbracken, younger of that ilk, hereby solemnly declare and promise, that eschewing the snares, devices, lures, and seductions of young women seeking wedlock, I will on no account or pretence whatever, enter into the state of matrimony, nor call any woman my wife until and not before I retrieve the whole of the lands comprising the Barony of Dalbracken, granted to my renowned ancestor Comal the Daring, in the year of grace 1064, by King Malcolm the Third, surnamed Canmore, of glorious and

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heroic memory. I further declare and promise, that I will labour with soul and body to earn by honourable service, or other righteous means, sufficient money to redeem the portion of my inheritance now voluntarily surrendered in mortgage to William Kylesmuir, merchant in London, to whom I and my house are deeply indebted for his timely succour in the day of our tribulation. Furthermore, I pledge myself to do no act and accept no employment unworthy of a landed gentleman."

A secret article which could not safely appear on record, or now be mentioned to Warriston, bound Malcolm to spurn the Usurper's gold, and pray every night for the restoration of the descendant of Canmore to these afflicted realms.

Gilbert Vulpine, who had to subscribe similiar obligations, concentrated in his person most of the virtues and vices of his race. He was remarkably handsome, vivacious, and universally companionable. With an intuitive perception of what would please, he set a high value on the commendation of others, but it was the only test he knew of right or wrong. Gilbert had absolutely none of what is called a moral sense or inward monitor. He learned with unusual facility what ever could be taught by another, and retained it unaltered as wax does the unmodified impression of a seal. Capable also of following his instructors in applying knowledge, he never was known to originate anything except tricks to outwit his playfellows. This admired youth, possessing a lively sense of the expediency of providing for his own welfare and gratification, was totally insensible to the sorrows or joys of even his nearest relations. This obtuseness, so complete and unaffected, made his indifference scarcely culpable.

Clara, his only sister, justly called mamma's child, was but half a Vulpine. Good nature, lively frolics, with unvarying cheerfulfulness and rare beauty, characterized her from the cradle upwards.

All the world allowed that the Laird of Dalbracken was justified in apprehending no danger to his plans from the inclinations of young folks who appeared to be such contrasts to one another, as Gilbert and Maude, Malcolm and Clara. The world and the Laird, however, were both in

error. *He was doomed to discover on the same day, that both pairs of adopted brothers and sisters had fallen in love.*

The two girls, suspected and interrogated, owned without hesitation, that they loved their adopted brothers as Christians ought, but had not promised marriage, the only thing forbidden, before the prescribed time. The particulars of the two cases shewed a marked difference between them.

Malcolm, who as he grew up had become more timid in the company of Clara, one day when they were walking in the woods by themselves, began playfully to parody words and deeds said and done by her in spritely childhood, four years previously, by saying,—“Oh Clara, I love you for being good to me; but you never kiss me now; do let me kiss you.”

He completed the parody by kissing her, and repeating the kiss with a fervour beyond playfulness, before she could extricate herself from his clasping arms, and assert the dignity of a young lady, agreeably to the lesson set by her mother and governess. Taking the rebuke which she gave him as indicatory of coldness and dislike, the young man became miserable. Poor Clara, threatening never to see him alive again, kept her word far more truly than her heart desired. She was doomed not to return his kisses till the lips that imprinted them had ceased to feel the breath of life.

Maude's attachment to Gilbert, almost the only representative of man she saw, was pure and ardent. Perceiving it while coveting the dilapidated estate of Dalbracken, which was still to him the most enviable object in Gowan-dale, he knew with precocious worldly mindedness, that were the old gentleman in the tomb of his fathers, and such a fate as that of his elder brother to befall Malcolm, the present heiress-presumptive would then have half the property to bestow on a husband. Confident of being able to make her renounce vows imposed by the deceased when she became her own mistress, Gilbert got Maude to plight her troth to him, and to forswear others, calculating on the fidelity of her ingenuous spirit, and foreseeing that the engagement need not prevent his making any more advantageous match that might offer.



The Laird of Dalbracken, feeling like the General who, concentrating all his forces to defend a fortress, has left the outworks which command it to be occupied by the enemy, was in despair. Duncogle inwardly rejoicing at the explosion, now for the seventh time renewed his proposal of dispatching the lads to London; and by strongly representing their immediate removal as necessary to avert the deplorable consequences of their intercourse with the young ladies, which, it was too evident, no other measures, the most wise and stringent, had sufficed to guard against, he prevailed on his neighbour to dispense with further moral training, and equip the youths for appearing in another scene.

Mr Kylesmuir having finished the account of his friends, of which the foregoing may be considered an amplification with comments, Warriston desired the young men to be admitted, in order that he might see what was in them, and if possible ascertain what they were fit for before taking any part in their favour.

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## CHAPTER II.

LORD WARRISTON, who had associated with profligates in his youth, and looked through saints, sinners, round-heads, and cavaliers in manhood, scrutinizing his youthful countrymen, and drawing them out, was soon able to guess pretty accurately the nature of their parts and the extent of their acquirements. On the whole, he thought well of their attainments. Commending their general knowledge of philosophy and the sciences, he praised the tutor who had conducted them to fresher fountains than the dry breasts of the old nurses of civilisation. Taking Kylesmuir aside while the lads ran over his library, the Councillor of State remarked that Malcolm seemed to have the greatest capacity and best moral instincts; Gilbert the quickest understanding and most adaptability to actual business. Meanwhile that rusticity and ignorance of their fellow creatures which characterised both, incapacitated them for any employment in England. The

heather bell of Gowandale is a beautiful thing, said he, but it will not bloom on a rich soil. They are in a critical position. If the elements which the good Dalbracken has compressed remain imprisoned, his pupils may succumb to scorn and ridicule as amiable simpletons: but the probability is that their restrained spirits will presently expand with violence, impelling these young fellows from habits of virtuous poverty to the extreme of moral laxity and modish extravagance. The danger to them from national antipathy, in this age and country, is also imminent. Without extraordinary prudence or unmanly submission, it is scarcely possible for a young Scotsman, living among Englishmen of his own years, to escape deadly quarrels. Yet at all risks they must learn to assume the English manners of the day, and to pass in the crowd without being pointed at as "foreigners."

Lord Warriston having least difficulty respecting Gilbert, who formally entertained few political scruples, secured a Government appointment for him in the island of Ormus, which the Protector then intended to obtain the cession of, and to make it the emporium of a great chartered company which he was about to establish for carrying on the trade of England with Arabia and Persia. Introducing Malcolm to the President of Committees (equivalent in functions to the modern Chairman) of the East India Company, he solicited a situation for the youth in the service of that grand association, which was not immediately under the republic. In this his Lordship failed, and was obliged to place Malcolm under the authority of the merchants in Ormus, in an employment less respectable than that of the state, which the youth's father interdicted his acceptance of.

However, both the commercial bodies, existing and projected for trading to the East, at this time required candidates for serving them, to qualify by studying twelve months in an oriental college, recently instituted by Sr Josiah Child, the president just referred to. This institution, I beg to note, was not at Haileybury. The students in it were not called "the future aristocracy of India," nor encouraged to imitate the ways of young Lords at Oxford, and allowed to despise their masters before becoming able to serve

them. The founder having loftier aims than the mere administration of patronage, instead of simply substituting the niceties of written Arabic and Sanscrit for the Greek and Latin used at the Almacks of learning, made those seeking instruction in his college learn to discourse with living orientals in their living tongues, and to transact business in the common style of conversation and correspondence. The most successful teacher at present was one Bahadur Ally, a native of Delhi. This person, bringing his pupils very soon to recollect the most frequent combinations of the two or three hundred words which express the ideas connected with affairs of active life, rendered their further progress the source of exciting amusement. The learners, wearing eastern dresses, and taught to assume characters, wrangled as hucksters driving a bargain; exacted the dues of Government as tax-gatherers; issued stern mandates as commanders of armies; and even held forth as priests in the service of the mosque, and of the Hindoo pagoda. The young Lairds of Gowandale took to these performances with glee, and both, but particularly Gilbert, excelled in them.

Two fellow students here, with whom they formed an early intimacy, were Dr Cambridge, a young physician, and Mr Bethel, a young clergyman, destined, strangely as it seemed, to add the offices of their professions to the functions of diplomacy in negotiating with Princes for the East India Company. The most important privileges then possessed by Englishmen in the dominions of the great Mogul, had been obtained from the Emperor by a medical man through the influence of his skill in the healing art: and it was discovered, that, while laymen were inadmissible, a minister of any religion might traverse hostile camps, and enter the palaces of tyrants in the East with safety. Hence, Sir Josiah Child, generalizing these facts, and anticipating a crisis when the most valuable provinces of India might, with able diplomacy, be procurable from one of the competitors for the throne, in return for a European force to enable him to win the whole empire from his imperial brothers, expected the learned negotiators to achieve much on behalf of the *Company*.

Agreeably to Warriston's recommendation, the young men obtained admission to a club called "the Brethren," consisting of persons of their own age and condition. Aware of the trials which it would expose them to, he endeavoured to put them on their guard, by noticing, in a jesting way, what appeared to him the dangerous tendency of each. "Master Malcolm," said he, "your papa hoped to keep back the arrow by drawing it with the bow-string to his ear; but once set free, it will fly the other way, nobody knows how far, unless you limit its flight. Beware of petticoats." His counsel to Gilbert was—"Have patience, my young friend: do not try to run down fortune, as a greyhound catches a hare; and shun the dice box."

The Club was calculated to accomplish the councillor's views in anglicising its new members, and familiarising them to the customs of society. It perhaps did more than he foresaw. Though Puritanism, pervading the mass of the common people, still reigned in the Government in awkward alliance with military despotism, the gentry were already tired of it, and their sons had a marked inclination to licentiousness. Those belonging to "the Brethren," affected the air of Cavaliers, and were by no means strait-laced in what they said or did. The refinement of their models, however, was wanting. The stern "Slovens," at the head of the Commonwealth, had banished elegance and delicacy of manners. The Brethren, representing the vulgar idea of courtiers in dress, lofty bearing and morals, were ostentatiously rude in their intercourse. "English" in their mouths was the superlative of excellence, the name of every other country and its adjective were terms of reproach. So far from desisting in presence of parties whom such language might displease, they considered it proof of sincerity and manliness to speak with contempt of Scotland and France, for instance, in the hearing of Scots and Frenchmen. This gave the strangers difficult parts to play, and they took opposite courses. Gilbert, with the pliability of his nature, and the coldness of his inborn feelings, suppressing them altogether, assumed the national slang and offensive prejudices of his new associates. They extolled him as the only

sensible and liberal Scot they had seen, though some regarded his conversion with suspicion. Malcolm, unskilled in the light retorts and evasions which defeat petty attack, felt keenly the sarcasms on his country, that seemed to be struck indirectly at him, which he could not properly either return or flee from. Yet lamenting his old companion's bad taste, he protested with good temper against injurious assertions, and endeavoured to correct palpable errors. He soon found, however, that "Southrons" studied only such parts of history as authorized them to boast. To his dismay, none of them had ever heard of William Wallace at Stirling bridge, Robert Bruce and Bannockburn. They received his account of them, and the feats of Joan of Arc with incredulous derision. He was called a fable-monger incorrigibly prejudiced against England. The poor Scot overwhelmed with this blind intolerance, resolved to keep silent in future, unless personally insulted. Beginning again to feel more at home, and ceasing to be noticed for his singularity, he seemed to rise in the esteem of most of the members. An individual named Horseley, who had all along been conspicuously ill-natured, was wont to fix his eyes on young Dalbracken while speaking to others in abuse of anything not English. On one occasion, having failed in eliciting reply, he had the effrontery to appeal to Malcolm whether the Scots were not a lousy people, and was answered, that regarding the question as a joke, he said "no"; but were it or any like it proposed again, he must consider the interrogation a personal indignity. Several members interfering, put down the aggressor by expressions of disapprobation of his conduct. I must observe that your Vulpine, who oddly enough was now Horseley's chosen companion, had secretly led him to believe Malcolm "duh hill," that is, unlikely to resent insult: and, more strangely still, he on this occasion counselled Malcolm in a whisper not to take shelter under the protection of members who might pity him, but require Horseley to retract his words. This advice was rejected, because it involved the inconsistency of calling the same thing a joke this minute, and a serious offence the next. *Pity*, the adviser well knew, was

a word which no Dalbracken could endure when applied to himself.

The only members of the Club whom Malcolm liked, and seemed liked by, were Child and Waller, son and nephew of the president of the East India Company, whom he had originally met at the house of Lord Warriston. These friends took pleasure in shewing him all the remarkable places in London with which they were familiar. One of them, connected with events in this history, demands notice. It was the grand resort and hiding hole of deprecators on society whom the Civil War had engendered, known by the name of the "Cavern." The police tacitly reckoned it a sanctuary which they ought not to invade unless expressly ordered by authority. Under the escort of an ex-burglar of distinction, who, repenting of his sins, and taking to long graces, had risen to the honours of Provost-Marshal in the army, the three young men obtained access to the Cavern. Lying for hours in one of the dark nooks, they marvelled at the new aspect of life presented to them in a community of energetic beings cemented by crime and glorying in its commission. The means of securing felons from pursuit in this retreat, and of facilitating their escape, in the event of its being forcibly entered, appeared to be contrived with infinite sagacity.

When the young Lairds of Gowandale had been about ten months in the English metropolis, two fair strangers, known as "the Countesses," appearing occasionally in the Park, excited the admiration of several members of the Club. They were both handsome women, but the younger was uncommonly beautiful. More than all, a mystery hung over them which enhanced the interest produced by their foreign dresses and appearance of high station. The French ambassador knew them to be of noble families and ladies of fortune: but having somehow given offence to the queen regent, Anne of Austria, they were in disgrace at her court, and had been exiled from Paris. Horseley and Gilbert, ambitious of knowing persons so much talked of, obtained an introduction through a gentleman attached to the French embassy, and met with a polite reception in his company, but

never could gain admittance alone, or see the Countesses at home afterwards. The distinguished foreigners had women's reasons for disliking both visitors.

Young Dalbracken, not seeking to push himself in the way of "petticoats," went at this time to inquire of a bookseller connected with the continent, whether any person could be found to teach him spoken French, as Bahadur Ally taught Oriental languages. Invited to return two days subsequently, he was then introduced to Monsieur Scapin, advocate or barrister, a gentleman with gray hair, yellow complexion, and a talent at making bows, who apprised Malcolm that a lady of the high nobility of his country, who had moved in the first Parisian circles, being under temporary embarrassment, was anxious to instruct persons of quality in her native language.

"Nothing further is requisite, Sir," added the learned lawyer, "than to mention the name of any notable person on the spot, acquainted with your illustrious house, to enable me to have the honour of presenting you to the noble instructress." Without exactly knowing who might be notable, he named Mr Kylesmuir as his referee. "Again pardon me, Sir, is it that you know Monsieur, the Captain Fluke of the Commercial Navy of England?" said Monsieur Scapin.—"No."—"Then," continued he, "do me the favour to walk to his hotel."

The personage so magnificently described, lived in a dirty inn near the Thames. He was a strong, coarse-looking man, with an impudent stare in his eyes, and a nose bearing a crop of grog blossoms. Professing to know Kylesmuir, who, he averred, could cash a draft any day for £100,000, the Captain shook our youth by the hand, and affected to patronise him. Disgusted with this low-bred and ruffian-like fellow, he got away and waited the result of his reference, wondering what venerable hag these multiplied preliminaries would introduce him to for tuition. In due time the bowing advocate waited on him with additional grimaces, announcing how satisfactory the enquiries had been answered by Mr Kylesmuir: and intimating that the candidate for instruction must now see Madame de la

Seine, the mother of Madame the Countess of Boutele, who was to have the felicity of teaching Monsieur the Baron of Dalbracken to speak the language of civilised Europe and the world. Thither they went: the elder lady entered, and Scapin retired. Malcolm could read French well, but was not able to collect the meaning of one who spoke it rapidly. Madame de la Seine's volubility perplexed him sorely, though by dint of repetitions, variations of phrase, and gesture, she managed in half an hour to turn her visitor inside out, and to decide on his admissibility as a pupil. Going back next forenoon, he at last saw the only person of all the forementioned, whom he had wished to see. He at once recognised the apparition to be the celebrated Countess, by the description which he had heard at the Club, of the peaked handkerchief which she wore on her head, in imitation of that in the pictures of Mary Queen of Scots. The impression which she now made on him was like that of painting, sculpture, or other work of imagination beheld for the first time. In her, female youth enhanced by beauty and grace, was felt by its magical affinity for the heart in a form altogether new to him, no more resembling a Scottish or English lady of that day than a robe of Brussels lace resembles a field of its native flax in blossom, or a Grecian statue the marble rock it was quarried from. Her dress, in which two colours and the white ground were finely harmonized, fitted so well, that it appeared part of herself, as the plumage is part of a bird; and her graceful movements seemed equally suited to the occasion. The soft melody of her voice completed his fascination, when she began to converse, not running half-a-dozen words into one composite sound, like the jabberers of her country, but pronouncing each distinctly enough to make it understood by a foreign reader of French. Leading him from monosyllables to sentences, in his replies, the Countess, visibly pleased at his increasing confidence, entered imperceptibly on her work of instruction, by repeating his expressions with the proper corrections of pronunciation, accent, and idiom. After getting used to encounter the kindly but vivid



expression of her eye, and to look on regular features charged with intellect, without a tinge of red to assimilate cheeks to any ever seen before, he gradually gained sufficient confidence to talk fluently. I need not chronicle Malcolm's progress in detail.

At the first lesson, he thought highly of his own qualifications as an intelligent learner: yet felt somehow dissatisfied with the steady reserve of his instructress, who apparently felt that she was still of high nobility. Before end of the second, he found the ice thawing, and that firm masonry which obtains between two young folks of similar rank and different sexes coming into operation. On third day, much irrelevant matter was introduced into the discourse, which was generally of a more glowing sort than is necessary in learning any language.

The parties spent the fourth day of tuition to a large extent in personal remarks, with occasional contact of hands, during which the lady forgot to correct his grammar, and he did not think personalities from her so unpleasant as they of late are in debate.

On the fifth day they had got to the emotional parts of speech. Sitting with heads in approximation, and whispering as if the wall behind them had ears and they secretly kept from it, the two were long at this lesson. In the course of it I am sorry to say, Malcolm took some liberties which though innocent in themselves, no young gentleman ought to take with a governess. The young lady alarmed, rather late I fear, intreated him to "leave the house and her forever" very passionately: but he would not go away. Short the lad was again in love, in spite of all the old Laird's training. Recollecting the discovery which caused his premature removal from home, I trembled to think what this new affair, tenfold more serious, might drive him.

For full two months after the time adverted to, your friend Dalbracken's friends knew not what had become of him. None of them saw his face or heard where he was, but a large and appalling amount of his drafts for money caused Mr Kylemuir, the unflinching friend of his family, to postpone p

ment of the last until he received explanation from the drawer. This awakened Malcolm to a sense of his madness. Yet incapable of immediately checking himself, he, with infinite reluctance, applied for a loan to Gilbert, rather than submit to the interrogations of Mr Kylsmuir.

Young Vulpine, in no fear of ultimately losing, had besides a scheme of his own to carry out, which compliance might favour, and therefore advanced a considerable sum on condition that he should be introduced to Madame de Boutade on such terms as might induce her to receive his friendly visits. As the Countess made no objection, Dalbracken got his old companion a footing in Parliament Court, where she resided. The truth is, that Gilbert, hearing on what appeared the best authority that the French lady would soon inherit a large fortune, feed Scapin handsomely to give him her history, and was told an artful tissue of falsehood mixed with truth, which led him to believe a married woman a widow, and a most desirable match for an ambitious youth. Vulpine, I must here record, had before this been taken to Oliver's court by Warriston, and still essaying to be all things to all men, found such favour in the Protector's sight, as to be invited to sleep with him, in order that they might pray together after the odd fashion of the Puritans. What need he despair of now? Nothing, it seemed to him, was wanting but connection with the aristocracy of France, to assure him of the dignified office of ambassador to His Most Christian Majesty. Conceiving Malcolm to be a suitor for her hand in his timid way. Gilbert felt no diffidence of being able to cut him out by superior address. The position of Adeline, the charming Countess de Boutade, will presently transpire. Meanwhile, whatever suspicions respecting her may arise, I am bound to state that she had hitherto done nothing to forfeit her place in the elevated society of France.

Still ignorant of his early friend's wild projects, too conscious also of loving and being loved to entertain jealousy, Malcolm felt the necessity of intermitting his draughts of the intoxicating beverage which the lady administered, and

on the plea of health, set off for a few days to a quiet inn at Tunbridge Wells.

Here solitude did not fail to awaken sad reflections on his late conduct, and the desperate condition which it had reduced him to. Adeline never asked him for a farthing. The remuneration which it was said she expected for teaching remained unpaid. In their intercourse, she had always comported herself and been treated as a woman of quality. So, when her will became the only law he could obey, and the gratification of her wishes his sole enjoyment, he could withhold nothing in his power that seemed wanted by the beloved being whose soul, he felt certain, was devoted to him. Her unobtrusive craving for splendid jewellery and other costly things of substantial value, which incidentally came every other day to light, appearing the weak point of her amiable nature, he would have exhausted the treasures of an empire, and actually drew ten times more than his father could spare, for offerings at the shrine of his insatiable idol.

Walking alone in his native element, the country, he soliloquized in this manner:—

“Adeline, it is my conviction, has loved and can love none but me. Yet, methinks, there is occasionally something in what she says above the intuitions of female youth. *Believe me*, said she one day, *a woman can forgive any injury, but not contempt, from a man she has loved.* And again:—*They are the deepest, not, I assure you, the earliest impressions which the heart retains longest.* Mr Wylie would contend that knowledge of this kind comes from experience alone. How is it I could never learn, why a creature of her refinement and elevated thoughts can be on confidential terms with that blackguard skipper Fluke, and the over-civil and under-bred lawyer Scapin?”

Then ashamed of himself for harbouring suspicion, he began, like a boy shaking pismires from his hair after sleeping on the summer grass, to drive all ignoble surmises from his mind by mechanical agitation. Tunbridge, alas! brought him neither mental health nor peace within. No more could he face his best friend, Mr Kylesmuir, nor his only patron,

Lord Warriston, after having run headlong into the snare which his Lordship good-humouredly pointed out.

The first letter which he received in this retirement contained an earnest demand from Vulpine for immediate repayment of his loan. Throwing it in the fire, he resolved, with bitter indignation, to get rid of it by taking no notice of so cruel and unreasonable a dun. Presently another epistle reached him, bringing vexation of a different and still more unexpected kind. The object of his adoration wrote to inform him that the arrival of a packet from France announced the death of her husband, an event that required the suspension of arrangements of love, which, however ardent, were proscribed by the rules of good society during a lady's widowhood. Malcolm saw at once that he must now become her husband or lose her forever. He knew that the Countess would immediately become mistress of an estate, descending from her father, worth 150,000 francs a year, and (without enquiry) believed it free from debt. The struggle in the young man's breast between passion and duty, was violent but short. The deeply impressed commands of his revered father, for whom respect was now more hallowed by separation, sounded in his ear like a supernatural voice from the dead, and he shrunk with horror from the idea of marriage to one whose wealth, however ample, could not be applied to the redemption of Dalbracken. Laying open his heart to Adeline, in a tone shewing the extent of her dominion over it, he pleaded a solemn engagement and the honour of his family for determining not to see her again. I have thus disclosed the feelings and convictions under which Malcolm acted.

On learning his determination respecting her, she addressed him in a calm friendly letter, expressing regret for having put him to expense which, she now understood, he could not conveniently afford, and begging that he would take back Vulpine's draft, which had been indorsed to her to pay certain goldsmiths for a diamond necklace that happened not to be ready when Malcolm left town. Thus confirmed in his good opinion of the lady, and reindorsing the draft, he returned it to his importunate creditor.

Gilbert was, by this time, as much intoxicated with the prospect of gain as the other had been with passion. Literally shunning the "dice-box," but excited by the confident hope of possessing a wife universally admired, the means of display, and high station, he was in full speed after his game to the verge of a precipice, and ready to be carried over it by his own momentum; fondly imagining that, after bribing the lady's counsel, and ingratiating himself by drinking brandy with Fluke, he must be safe from deception whenever their statements were supported by other information. The Countess continuing long cold, punctilious, and distant, consented by degrees to receive presents, and, as the only means of winning her, they were poured into her lap. She softened and became enchantingly agreeable, yet allowed not even a hand to be kissed by the assiduous lover. Finally, she agreed to accept him as her lord and master, on his effecting a settlement of her differences with the Regent and Cardinal Mazarin through his Highness the Protector's intercession. On this head the youth had to consult Lord Warriston, who rudely demolished his castles in the air, and made him renounce the prosecution of the match. Unfortunately just before this arrestment of his course, Gilbert had discounted a bill drawn by Adeline on her steward in Languedoc for a sum which exhausted his credit, and left him penniless as young Dalbracken.

The return from the latter of the indorsed and reindorsed draft, welcome as it was at the moment, told tales of an intimacy with the Countess, and, above everything, the news of the husband's actual death, which Scapin had assumed long before, compelled Gilbert to think himself duped. This belief animating him with intense rage, he swore before the Lord Mayor that the woman calling herself Adeline Countess de Boutade was, he verily believed, a witch and harlot, who, exercising her diabolical arts, had obtained money from him on false pretences, and committed the heinous crime of adultery (then capital) with sundry persons. He procured a warrant, in that superstitious age, for her apprehension, meaning to cite Malcolm as a witness against the accused. The latter was doomed to feel tha

misfortunes never come single. He had just returned to the Club, and was chatting with his friends, when Horsely entered with the additional air of insolence which he had worn ever since learning that the Countess, after turning him, as it were, out of doors, received the object of his persecution into favour. "Ha!" cried he, "I thought you had deserted us, and gone to France with your Marie Stuart: So she has taken you to her arms as her Bothwell, not blown you up like a Darnley—eh?" Dalbracken, more decidedly than usual, demanded to know whom and what he meant. The other hastened to remove ambiguity by applying to Adeline (laying emphasis on French) the most opprobrious monosyllable designative of frail woman. "None but a rogue and a fool to boot calls her so," was the prompt reply. Horsely, astonished, insisted on instant apology and retraction of these offensive words, which were peremptorily refused. "Set the example of retracting defamation which you at least do not know to be deserved," added Malcolm. Taking this as a taunt, the young man, who was a spoiled child, of fierce temper, and fond of the notoriety of a duel, shaking the hilt of his rapier at Dalbracken, rejoined, that no beggarly vagrant, whether French or Scotch, should make a free-born Englishman, in his person, eat in his words. In vain the sensible members of the Club interposing, declared Horsely in the wrong, and tried to make peace by urging mutual concessions. Both the parties were resolute, and must fight. Seconds being in those days belligerents, it was specially arranged that a friend only to see fair play should attend each. Malcolm was attended by Dr Cambridge; and his servant, David Kirkland, also kept near him, when the meeting took place next morning. The combatants having equally studied fencing, were familiar with the use of the small sword. At the first encounter, after their weapons had crossed in collision several times, Horsely's was broken. According to rule, Dalbracken might have availed himself of the advantage thus obtained, but, lowering the point of his sword, he invited the other to arm anew. This appeared generous conduct, and the two friends attempted an accommodation, which the Englishman con-

temptuously rejected. When the contest recommenced, he made a lunge at his opponent's head, which wounded him on the temple. In many men the sense or consciousness of courage slumbers till roused by palpable danger. Young Dalbracken, feeling the warm blood from his own veins running down his neck, rose to more perfect collectedness for defence, and, impelled by a ferocity unknown before, made what is called a *time thrust* at the proper moment, and transfixed his adversary. The ill-fated Horsely died on the spot.

The survivor stood by in a state of stupefaction until urged by Cambridge to follow him to a place of concealment in the country, when he expressed a preference for the Cavern, and was accompanied thither by Davy. Covered with his own blood, he obtained ready admission of his qualification for an asylum among felons. His right to the freedom of the place was confirmed, in the course of the day, by handbills offering a reward for the seizure of the murderer. The new inmate received appropriate attention from the keepers, who pointed out to him that the doors could be opened from within only; and were any of them blown in with a petard, or otherwise forced, he might find exit through others to some of the least accessible parts of the town or river. The large apartment, filled on the sides with boxes like those of a coffee-house, where darkness reigned, was clear in the middle, and lighted by a hanging lamp. The only gleams of daylight came from an outer court, containing a covered pit, to which sundry ghastly allusions met the stranger's ear. Here Malcolm lay undisturbed in his person for a whole week, listening to accounts of the plan and perpetration of acts of theft, house-breaking, and murder, over which the criminals exulted exactly like brave men over their victories in war. The distinguished malefactor, too, was greeted with applause by the population of the Cavern, just as the hero is honoured on the street or in a crowded theatre. Certain artificial virtues, it is to be lamented, are so nearly akin to vices of the worst dye, that inexperienced eyes may be pardoned for overlooking the boundary between them. Will it be credited that a youth, so carefully brought up, given to admire whatever is lofty and beautiful

in nature or art, one naturally humane too, took a lively interest in the deeds of these miscreants, and, moved by his desperate predicament, eagerly wished to join a gang of highwaymen, in hopes of being elected their Captain? Communicating his resolution to Davy, he stated his reasons, in order to get the opinion of the only friend within reach. These men, said he, think themselves like a separate nation at war with their neighbours, and have as good a right to be so as the usurper Cromwell and his Ironsides. This being the case, they commit no crime in killing and robbing enemies; on the contrary, they are justly entitled to the praise which every body bestows on successful warriors. My father himself would approve of what I propose, if he knew what has befallen me. Davy's undisturbed understanding and regard for his master saw the subject in a different light. Cromwell and his rascals, replied he, will, no doubt, suffer in the world to come, but, in this life, when one of them is shot, he dies, they say, with glory, and is decently buried; but when a robber is caught, they hang him up with a rope about his neck, an ugly end, which the old Laird's heart would break, if he thought his son could ever come to. Davy's homily recalling his master to virtue and law, he wrote a letter to the Countess, entreating her to get him a commission in the French army, wherein he might live and gain laurels, or die as became the descendant of Comal, without fear of the gallows. It described fully his present plight. David Kirkland being dispatched with this missive, and desired not to hurry the lady, was told to wait for an answer. Malcolm saw little difficulty at present in effecting his escape to France.

Meanwhile a convocation began to assemble in the centre of the Cavern: and he recollected that it was to sit in judgment on a knotty point as to the right of a denizen to his helpmate after being condemned to death and unexpectedly pardoned, while she, in the interval, had become the partner of another. Dalbracken, Child, and Waller, had been strongly recommended by the "Marshal" (Provost omitted) to attend on this interesting occasion. During the investigation, conducted with awful solemnity, a



titter was heard in one of the dark boxes. The proceedings being suspended, two youngsters in disguises were dragged before the lamp: and though the keepers had admitted them as persons seen there before, they were condemned as intruders without qualification or pass. "Douse the glim! Cob the Jasoes!" was the yell that rose: meaning, out with the light! dispatch the spies! The place instantly became dark. The cover was taken off the pit, and a loathsome smell of putridity issued from the outer court. Dalbracken receiving a peremptory summons to assist at the execution of the spies, had already resolved what to do. Wrapping his cloak round his left arm and drawing his sword, he dashed into the crowd, laying about him with the flat of his weapon until, on reaching the prisoners, he made way for them to one of the doors. "There, Child, Waller, draw the bolts and run for your lives!" cried he as they obeyed and disappeared.

The ruffians, taken utterly by surprise, had offered no resistance, but now hurled a shower of cudgels and brickbats at the head of their assailant, one of which knocked him to the ground in a state of insensibility. The bold spirits whom our youth so recently admired had not time to re-light the lamp, and transfer him to the pit, with indispensable formalities, when the Lord Protector's keys, sledge-hammers, to wit, rung on the doors with crashing blows, as the intended victims returned with a party from the nearest military guard, who, entering at last, found the apartment deserted by all but the person to be delivered. The young men foreseeing that he would most likely be put to death for liberating them if not immediately succoured, had taken this step: but now the reputed murderer was in the hands of justice, and must appear next morning at the Mansion-House. They, however, setting zealously to work, did their utmost to save the friend who had saved them.

Early on the following day young Dalbracken, being required to proceed for examination, was escorted part of the way along with another prisoner whom the mob hooted as a witch going to be burnt in Smithfield. The person thus treated had the appearance of a tall ungainly woman in a

black veil, whose body was covered with an elegant French gown and a petticoat too short for the wearer, so that a pair of large shanks and feet appeared below them in coarse shoes and stockings. This figure was produced to the Lord Mayor as the body of Adeline de Boutade, Frenchwoman, charged on the oath of Gilbert Vulpine, Scottishman, with practising sorcery, whereby she robbed him of various large sums of money, and so forth. When unveiled, this witch was found to have transformed herself into a Scotsman of four and twenty, with a shrewd freckled face and tolerable beard. In an unmistakable tongue he called himself a native of Gowandale in Strathclyde, but excited the worst suspicions by doggedly refusing to give his own name or that of his employer in London. It was surmised and loudly affirmed, to account for this reserve, that the prisoner served none but Satan. The crowd in the house and outside pressing near with eager curiosity, cried out, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live!" Malcolm alarmed lest the fanaticism of the people might be raised to violence, stopped this ferment against Kirkland, by claiming him as his servant, and naming himself. "The murderer! the Scotch murderer!" rung on all sides, and drew undivided attention to him. Davy now put in his plea. "On the faith and hope of an honest man, my Lord," said he respectfully, "I am neither witch nor warlock, but a God-fearing Scots lad. I commune with no imps of Satan. I consented to put on these strange garments with no worse intention than to get a poor lassie out of trouble when I thought she was going to be taken up for debt." The eloquence of the prisoner's tone and manner obtained his acquittal of all but the minor offence of aiding an escape from justice. In the meantime a coach approaching, with difficulty reached the Mansion-house door, and out of it came Sir Josiah Child, his son, and nephew. The President of the East India Company laid documents before the Lord Mayor which gave a remarkable turn to the proceedings.

I shall briefly make known the nature of the discoveries which had satisfied the highest authority in England that resort to the ordinary tribunals was inexpedient in the case

of Malcolm Dalbracken. In the first place, as intimately connected with the subject, I shall advert to the result of the enquiries which Warriston, induced by Gilbert's story, instituted into the life and conversation of the Countess de Boutade. Adeline was really a French lady of birth and originally of fortune, professing the principles of Ninon D'Enclos. She was a female libertine assuming all the license allowed to men of pleasure. More than tolerated in this by the upper classes of Paris, she might have lived envied and esteemed had she not involved herself in the fate of a gambler who was her favourite lover. Winning immensely, and living with her in the height of splendour, he fleeced half the rich courtiers, for which the Regent banished him and the Countess from Court. The tide turned. He exhausted her funds, ruining her legal husband ; and, finally, jumping at noon from the parapet of a bridge into the Seine, with his court dress on, drowned himself, and created a grand sensation. Adeline, thus left without resources, and driven from home, continued in other countries to indulge her ruling passion whenever she could captivate young men to her fancy, but was compelled to transgress the rigid morals of Paris by subsisting on their purses. With a fastidiousness which less recondite voluptuaries may think singular, she disliked Gilbert, notwithstanding his handsome person and well-formed features, because he had no heart. By dint, however, of that superlative art which conceals itself, she got command of his master-feeling, which emptied his pockets to propitiate her, as a step to his own exaltation. This gentleman, still pronounced everywhere "a fine young man," breathing vengeance for his disappointment, arrived in Parliament Court, at the head of a party of constables, to execute his warrant. The Countess, warned of his purpose, but not quite prepared for his reception, descended the stair wringing her hands, and implored a moment's private conversation with Mr Vulpine before the officers should do their duty. David Kirkland having just before delivered his master's letter, was waiting for an answer in the lobby, when Gilbert, passing in, desired the constables to remain outside till he

came back. The late accepted admirer now incautiously putting himself in the power of his former mistress, doubted not that she was about to purchase forbearance by restoring his precious gifts. Entering a room, he was instantly collared by Captain Fluke, who, assisted by four sailors, gagged, pinioned, and deposited him in the drawer of a seacot six feet odd inches in length. The men, securing the lock, and taking this noble luggage on their shoulders, descended by the back of the house through a lane leading to the Thames, where their vessel lay. Nothing could be more quietly done. The Countess, with all her servants, was in a distant part of the house, preparing to follow, when the constables, led by the great delay which occurred to believe something wrong, knocked loud and repeated the knock for admittance, on which Davy, ignorant of all in progress, opened the door. Thinking themselves obliged to him, two of the party, bidding others who remained without let none pass them *but the Scotchman*, ran up stairs to seize the lady. Adeline, getting behind the intruders by a private passage, locked them in. Then apprizing Kirkland, in her broken English, of the peril in which he had placed her by admitting the officers, she easily prevailed on him to exchange clothes and personate her, while she got off in his dress. The twilight being by this time far advanced, David, opening the door about an inch, called out in his best northern voice, "Now, gentlemen, if ye please, as I cannot see the Countess, I want to go home."—"Go along, Sawney!" was the response, and Adeline passed, soon turned a corner, and was presently on board of Fluke's cutter. Kirkland, proceeding in his disguise to release the baffled officials, was clutched as their lawful prey. The sequel has been recounted.

Sir Josiah Child, in gratitude for the preservation of his son and nephew, collected all persons cognizant of the causes of the fatal quarrel at the Club. They unanimously concurred that Horsely was the aggressor, and had provoked his fate. Soliciting an early audience of the Protector, the Baronet proceeded with his witnesses in a body and stated the case to his Highness. Cromwell, deeming it a very unimportant matter, *slapped his visitor on the back, saying,*

"Josiah, my good friend, I make you a present of this young Scot. We can spare him here, and he may be of use to you in the East." In wording this intimation to Dalbracken, the President informed him that he had been pardoned and transferred to the service of the East India Company.

The opinion of the Lord Protector being in his day something paramount to forms of law, the Lord Mayor, instead of holding proceedings and committing the prisoner for trial, dismissed him with a congratulatory address. Warriston used every effort to learn what had become of Gilbert Vulpine, but without success, till the vessel, sailing with the tide, had got fairly to sea.

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### CHAPTER III.

THE president of the East India Company rejoiced to discover in the preserver of his son, not, as might have been expected, a truculent Scot more ready to give a blow than a reason, but a youth of gentle manners and good sense. He was delighted in a higher degree to find Malcolm capable of comprehending his plan for founding a commercial empire in the East, and of participating in its author's enthusiasm for the execution of it.

Josiah Child, afterwards created a baronet by Charles II, was, with some vagaries, an accomplished man considerably ahead of his age. His Discourses on Trade and the architecture of Wanstead House, attest the various talents of the man to the present time. The inferences drawn by him from the information before the Company were just, and the conclusions which he arrived at bespoke a superior understanding. But in those days factors located on the coasts, seeing the affairs of the interior of India through an obscure and distorting medium, could give their employer in Europe very imperfect intelligence. Their despatches however, attested the zeal of the writers by incredible length and hosts of particulars, resembling the flocks of locusts which are wont to darken the land of their sojourn.

for days together. Dalbracken felt rather appalled, after all his hairbreadth escapes, when informed that he was to spend six months in the study of these state papers, in order to qualify himself for sharing in the great work contemplated, before proceeding to India. It will suffice here to note briefly what Sir Josiah Child had fished up from the abysses of manuscript.

The commerce carried on by the Company was subject to the most grievous interruptions, restrictions, and arbitrary exactions, by local rulers in the East, which rendered its profits uncertain and precarious. These serious evils were inseparable from the nature of the Mogul government. The emperor, residing at the distance of more than a thousand miles, being able to exercise little direct controul over his viceroys, left them, for most part, absolute sovereigns within their several provinces. These despots, frequently changed, were sure to abrogate whatever privileges their immediate predecessors had granted, often at a high price to the English factors. The fleeing of foreign traders being a legitimate perquisite of office, they possessed no security for public or private property in the country: and in fact they could hold it only by a gradation of bribes, or rather stipends, regularly administered to all, from the highest to the lowest official character. Yet even this fragile and humiliating tenure lasted no longer than the good pleasure of men by whom the policy or morality of keeping faith with Christian merchants was not recognised. To free the commerce over which he presided from such intolerable oppression, and to exalt its dignity as a profession, were the leading objects of Sir Josiah Child. "What can be a nobler undertaking," said he, "than to unite the East and the West by our merchant fleets bearing the superfluities of the one to supply the wants of the other, and enriching both? But the instruments of these mighty benefits to mankind must no longer be despised as pedlars and shopkeepers. It is time that we should possess the soil that yields the raw materials, and govern those who supply our merchandize." Then spreading the newest map of the day before his guest: "There," continued he, "you

see the Indian Ocean, our own element, it is the vast and impenetrable fortress of that commercial dominion which I anticipate. Now, the two terrestrial bastions, so desirable to obtain during the ensuing contentions, when many provinces will be bartered for assistance to the successful competitor, are Guzerat here, on the west, and Bengal on the east. Being secure in them, it will behove us next to, connect the two, from the Gulf of Cutch to the mouth of the Baranpooter, by an irregular curtain, comprehending the whole intervening coast within the sea breeze." The President talked much in the same strain, confirming his own sentiments frequently by citations from the transactions of the "wise Dutch," of whom, as aspiring merchants, he thought very highly.

Dr Cambridge was presently to take his departure for Hoogly, on the Ganges, where, under the guidance of the agent at the Factory, he was to begin operations by introducing himself into the confidence of the Viceroy, preparatory to negotiating the cession of Bengal. Although this ruler did not seem the most likely to succeed in the struggle for the throne, still, possession got from him, might be retained afterwards. Mr Bethel, as a minister of religion, would be commissioned at the same time to sound the disposition of the Governor of the Deccan, who being a prince of eminent piety, was thought likely to receive the envoy well. But the chief Factor of the Company, stationed at Surat, as best acquainted with the languages and politics of the country, was looked up to as most likely to obtain Guzerat and other acquisitions from Dara the heir-apparent, who being Lord of the district of Surat, a portion of the desiderated province, held communication with the English through his deputy, the governor of the castle. From that gentleman, Mr Jehoshaphat Guttlethorpe, the Court of Committees had ascertained the practicability of levying a sufficient force to impose almost their own terms, on any one of the contending parties, during, what must prove, a nearly balanced competition for the crown of the Moguls. Orders were in consequence sent out to conclude a treaty offensive and defensive with the eldest son of Shah Jehan, but

authorizing the negociator, at the same time, to use his discretion in forming other alliances, if they appeared better calculated to accomplish the grand object in view.

"The army of Guzerat" was to be commanded by a distinguished officer, selected on purpose, though not the senior, on the spot. Dalbracken himself was honoured with a Captain's commission, to serve in this force, which, as signed by the President, would supersede those issued on the occasion by the chief of Surat. The private history of this eminent functionary, to which he owed much of his reputation for profound knowledge of oriental polity, was peculiarly interesting. About twenty years before, when a young man, he had rescued a beautiful Hindoo Princess from the funeral pile, where in accordance with a savage custom, she was about to be consumed alive in the flames, along with the corpse of her husband. The President added from private information (none of the circumstances indeed being otherwise known), that the high-born lady, to reward the romantic generosity of the Englishman, became his wife, and thereby made him the brother-in-law of a powerful sovereign. She also claimed, on undoubted grounds, a small principality which her only daughter was expected to inherit. This sole offspring of so singular a union seemed to have made an impression of admiration on every one, whilst at her education in England, whence she had lately returned to India. This alliance of the Company's principal servant with the family of a native Prince, appeared extremely propitious to the great scheme in contemplation, especially when his talents and experience were taken into consideration. As the success of the President's aspiring project will depend essentially on the character and position of the royal viceroys, with whom it was proposed by him to open negotiations for the transfer of kingdoms to English merchants, I will now present a sketch of each from more accurate knowledge of them than was then obtainable from the archives of the India House

The imperial family of Delhi, descended from Sultan Barber, a scion of the famous conqueror Timur or Tamerlane,



who was a hybrid between the Toorkoman and Mong tribes. This origin might not promise a physiologist anything better than Tartar, ugliness of person and inferior mental faculties ; but subsequent marriages with Caucasian races had effectually changed the aspect and indeed the nature of this royal stock. The term Mogul applied to them has no reference to the Asiatic barbarians called Mongols or Mongolians. In India it comprehends all races of fair complexion and foreign descent from the north of Asia. Before the days of British ascendancy, European adventurers also if reckoned Mussulmans, used to come under the same vague appellation. When avowed Christians, they were then as are now styled *Feringhee*, a corruption of Frank. The Great Mogul, or reigning Emperor, in the time of the English Commonwealth, was Shah Jehan. Staining his hands with the blood of an infant nephew to gain the throne, he committed no atrocity afterwards, but made the noblest use of the highest power and dignity. Taking possession of the richest and one of the most extensive empires on earth early in life, he brought it to a condition of prosperity and happiness unknown before. Seated on the pinnacle of human grandeur, generally beset by storms, this monarch was denied none of the quiet felicities which can await men susceptible of them in the retirement of a private station. His wife, Noor Mehal, a woman eminent for talents and taste, devoted herself to make their home a place of undisturbed enjoyment, and suggesting or aiding, joined him in planning the new cities, palaces, gardens, masoleums, and mosque which rising over Hindostan, under his sway, still adorn with their ruins. No parents could have fairer offspring or more delight in them, while the children remained young and innocent. The curse of the murderer and usurper fell on Shah Jehan's latter days. "I have the sons I prayed for exclaimed the agonized sovereign, as he saw them arm to destroy one another in fratricidal war—"Oh, God, have the sons I prayed for to thee, but would I now had no sons !"

The Empress died long before her husband, and therefore escaped participation in his misfortunes. He has perpetuated

the memory of his love and her architectural taste in a masoleum at Agra, of unequalled beauty, which is to this day the admiration of travellers from the most refined nations of Europe. After losing such a companion, Shah Jehan fell into excesses ill suited to his years, which brought on premature dotage.

The four princes and two princesses, the objects of a father's painful interest, were in themselves remarkable persons. They had conspicuous, even extreme, differences to distinguish each of them from the rest, and at the same time prominent features in common to denote their close affinity. The minds of all displayed more imagination, and their persons more beauty, than is usual. Dara, the eldest son, sur-named the Magnificent, was a noble being with many faults. Contemporary poets justly ascribe to his outward appearance and general deportment, "all that man envies and woman loves:" but along with these he had the counter-balancing qualities of a haughty, vehement, and uncompromising temper. Having an early ambition of excellence, he availed himself of the aid of eminent teachers to master the literature of the East, and could write admirable Persian prose and verse when a mere boy. Impatient of studies which he had less inclination to, this prince had scarcely more acquaintance with the sciences than sufficed to let him understand the value and applicability of them in public affairs. To poetry, the favourite of his heart, Dara always reverted, in leisure and trouble, throughout his eventful life. Born with all things at his feet which power, treasure, and men's superstition for the hereditary great, allowed him to command, the *Walli Ahed* (heir apparent) of the Mogul empire began his career from a height above the highest aim of vulgar ambition. Hence his freedom from jealousy, low intrigue, and littleness of mind, the modern olympic dust which covers and stains humbler competitors for humbler dominion. Hence, also, the unbending resolution with which he wielded regal authority to enforce the dictates of intuitive truth, philosophy, and sentiment, in defiance of a flagitious aristocracy and priesthood. Dara, dwelling internally on what ought to be,

could not endure that which he saw around him. Nobles, properly the pillars of state and guardians of the toiling multitude, were the rapacious oppressors of his father's subjects. Priests, appointed to enlighten all classes, and guide them through virtuous ways to hopes of immortality, exulted in propagating error, persecuting knowledge, and in exciting Mahomedans to slay and pillage Hindoos. In vain did he make severe examples of Chiefs, who extorted money and punished disobedience with the torture of the Cora or Indian Knout. To no purpose did he turn reverend firebrands from their livings, for teaching the ruling sect hatred against the great body of the people. On the other hand, to conciliate the wise and good of both creeds, the crown prince wrote a book with a view to reconcile the rational parts of the Mahomedan and Hindoo religions, hoping to combine the professors of both in putting down intolerance. These efforts and performances won the intellect and worth of the country, but outraged the more powerful sacerdotal and military "interests." Dara, uniformly upheld by his father as a fit successor, protected him in his declining years, when younger sons were ready to wrench the sceptre from his palsied hand, or, in eastern idiom, to uncanopy the decrepid monarch's head.

Prince Suja, the second son, a man devoted equally to intellectual and sensual pleasure, might have been amply satisfied with his government of Bengal, amidst the paradise of angelic faces and forms with which he had surrounded himself in his palace of Rajmahal ; but since, to use his own words, others would leave him no choice but "the throne or the bier," it was necessary that he should enter the lists for the succession. This seeker of enjoyment, on principle as well as impulse, habitually addicted though he was to softer occupations, did not neglect the graver business of state. Under his management and wise forbearance, the wealth and industry of Bengal increased so rapidly that the province was capable of supplying treasure sufficient for the conquests which he meditated. The character of the race which he governed has always been a puzzle. Active in body, acute *in mind*, laborious in prosecuting their own interest, th

Bengalees are reckless of life in fearful deeds of fanaticism, and when they cannot escape death in other shapes, meet it with dauntless apathy. Yet these beings, if not the only, are the most immortal men known. The smell of gunpowder, or the gleam of cold steel, acting on their nerves like the glance of the torpedo on certain aquatic insects, paralyses their energies. Yet Suja, believing with many others, that officers are the most essential part of an army, thought his peasantry and labourers needed nothing but good ones to render the passive heroism of the people formidably active in war. He accordingly engaged the flower of the military adventurers then abundant in India, who could boast both of talent and experience. The principal of these were Persians, who, admitted freely to his revels, became zealously attached to his person, and he professed their form of Islamism. It is called *Sheeah*; the faith of the imperial family, and of most Indian Mussulmans, being the *Soonee*.

Aurungzeb, the third son, after growing conspicuous, appeared, at first sight, so dissimilar to the rest, that scandalous and disloyal gossips dared to suspect the Empress of being indebted to her peer, or chaplain (a distinguished living saint), for more than spiritual aid, when she brought forth an orthodox son to atone for the heresy of his senior brothers. Noor Mehal was a virtuous and attached wife. Aurungzeb, when a boy, had in fact most of the lineaments and propensities of his brethren. The change which he subsequently underwent was artificial, and effected expressly to place him in contrast with them. The holy man referred to, might with justice be reckoned the father of his greatness. This saint, finding the royal youth conscious of being the least favoured of his family in person and mind (with exception of the youngest), made him aware that the unpopularity into which the house of Timur had fallen for nearly a century past, arose from Akbar, the grandfather, and Jehangeer, the father of Shah Jehan, having lived in avowed scepticism, permitting no spoliation of idolaters, nor shewing the least partiality to the true faith. The reigning emperor, munificent in temporal things, had not retrieved the errors of his

predecessors by due benefactions to the established and only allowable religion. Dara and Suja, he further suggested, being worse, if possible, than the worst of their kindred, if any scion of the imperial house should become a rallying point to the faithful as a model of Soonee piety and obedience to the Koran, he would infallibly gain the support of the priesthood and a martial aristocracy, who, when united, must have the sovereignty in their gift. Never was seed sown in a more genial soil, nor directive impulse given that met with less disturbing force. Aurungzeb, to make himself as unlike as possible to his heretical relatives, who shone in pleasure, pomp, and luxury, mortifying his inborn desires, assumed the austerity, coarse apparel, and sanctimonious looks of a religious mendicant; went publicly to pray at the mosque five times a day; gave a fifth of his royal stipend to the poor; in short, conformed rigidly to the injunctions of the prophet, until he became, with certain reservations, all that at first he only affected to be. This personage was, at the same time, an accomplished scholar, had wit, and, in spite of his lugubrious aspect, liked jokes and puns, which he could not always suppress in grave political dispatches. Neglecting none of the ordinary means of gaining advancement, Aurungzeb retained the affection of his father until, on coming of age, he was installed in the important satrapy of the Deccan. From this epoch he became the centre to which all the zeal and bigotry of the dominant sect began to gravitate. Henceforth insincere and unprincipled, wearing an impenetrable mask, and letting nothing done by him appear above ground, he worked his way to dominion by sly and mine.

Morad, the youngest of the family, strongly resembling Dara in features, but less manly in form, and totally void of his higher mental faculties, was the darling of his mother, and made incorrigibly wilful before he left the nursery. Standing undraped, which he frequently did in his loose revels, this prince was a living Apollo Belvidere. Entrusted, while still a boy, as the privilege of birth, with the command of armies, he miraculously achieved splendid victories, and earned *reknown for personal valour* which eclipsed his brethren. The

liberality, or more properly the senseless profusion with which he squandered the booty and revenues at his disposal, rendered the stripling adored by the soldiers, and the paragon whom martial youth was required to worship and imitate.

The acuteness of the outward senses and their extreme impressibility seemed intended by nature to serve Morad in the place of intellect. Ever carrying, as it were, his own atmosphere of elegance along with him, however irregular his course, a veil of decency appeared to fall spontaneously over the moral abominations which he exhibited. No inattention could admit of his looking slovenly. Often putting on and off his magnificent dresses with negligent haste, an ungraceful fold, a discordant colour, was as speedily detected and remedied by him, as the mark of a dirt-ball or the smell of assafetida would be by an ordinary person. Morad was next to illiterate. His usual discourse seemed so idle and extravagant that it resembled the prattle of a child tired of common toys, and bent on having the moon and stars to play with. But when the prattler realized some of the stupendous things which he was wont to threaten and boast of ability to do, by scattering invading forces and crushing insurrection in his province, men not illogically thought him inspired with powers of mind which he had not in himself. The only doubt entertained was whether he derived supernatural might from his Maker or the Devil. But the millions who take things as they are, without caring for causes, believed in the songs of the poets, whose extravagant eulogy of the youthful conqueror and "dispenser of bounty to the brave," was chanted at every place of festivity throughout the spacious East.

Jehanara, pronounced in her day the loveliest daughter of the seven climates, was the feminine representative of the excellences and foibles of her family. From taste, feeling, and opinion, she upheld the rights of her elder brother, and in fact made common cause with him. Nearly as thoroughly taught as he, she wrote verses, nay, political dispatches of the first order with her own hand, discarding penmen, *the frequent betrayers of secrets in the Oriental world. Like Dara, who was mentally a Persian, she*

adopted the customs chiefly of Shiraz, and surrounded ingenious foreigners, decorated her apartments, and fitted her equipages, in an eclectic style, which was universally reckoned beautiful, though condemned as exotic.

After the death of his wife, the Emperor, whose understanding began to decay, made Jehanara, in the absence of the heir-apparent, his chief councillor and indeed minister. This princess therefore discharged the high duties of what I may call a stateswoman, in the name of her father, the vicegerency of his eldest son, during the period which is about to come under review.

Roshenara, a younger daughter of Shah Jehan, a lovely, comely and sensible person, who, properly matched, might have been a good wife. Unfortunately, however, she had to have been a good wife. Unfortunately, denied a husband for reasons of state, and destined to conduct public affairs of weight, she failed at times of keeping an unregulated position in subordination.

Aurangzeb, seeing the necessity of having a member of the family council which surrounded the Emperor, and his influence, chose this sister, who, on the whole, proved a very efficient agent to him. Fully comprehending the machinery which he wished to put in motion, she collected the female relatives of all the influential bigots about her, to whom constant communication was opened with the priests, and fanatics in all quarters. The Princess and ladies had to dress, furnish their rooms, prepare equipages, eat, drink, and pray according to the indigenous fashion of India. Anything foreign was to them a token of infidelity. To not a few of the party this was a theme of irreverent though secret derision. A considerable part of the nobles of India, who are descended from northern Asiatics, and the aboriginals of having no perception of what pleases or disgusts the fancy. Hindoo sculpture, painting, architecture, vestments adopted by the mass of Moslems, are ruinously monstrous. These deformities, the offspring of Persian, Cashmerians, and modern Bactrians, are wont to excite and ridicule. Yet, when imported taste came to be associated with the snares of Satan: "Hindustanee" "the only true faith:" and "Iranee" (or Persian) "*the road to perdition,*" the people began to ve

ugliness, and shut their eyes to the beautiful. "How orthodox," the most white-faced of the shop-keepers would say, rushing into the street to see the lady Roshenara's retinue, and her cow coach, with painted bullocks and gilt horns, all real Hindostanee: what a pity they do not look so well as the princess royal's conveyances and train!"

Roshenara, in the position of a lady abbess who has to enforce rigid discipline, could not grant that indulgence to others which she was unable to deny herself. Having rather an imperious temper too, she disdained to conciliate the affections and secure the secrecy of the fair devotees who were condemned to practise all the innumeries of superstition, without being allowed to share in the terrestrial consolation which they saw their superior enjoying.

However much the parties may suffer who betray such incautiousness and want of fellow-feeling, history is deeply indebted to them for the disclosures which they provoke.

Though Malcolm Dalbracken had yet to learn what the reader knows, of the Princes and Princesses of Delhi, the youth was now found wonderfully familiar with Indian politics as understood in the seventeenth century, and pronounced eminently qualified to expound the views of his new patron to the chief of Surat. The fleet of Indiamen having assembled, was waiting a fair wind to set sail. The President resolving to give his friend a passage in the best ship, which was of 400 tons burden, introduced him to the commander, Captain John Bull Webfoot, who, as senior Captain, had the designation of Commodore. Dalbracken did not entirely like this gentleman's extreme deference and cringing appearance in the presence of Sir Josiah Child, which deportment seemed unnatural to the character of a sea officer: but remembering Captain Fluke's brutal roughness, he rejoiced to think that his long voyage would be made under the auspices of one whom the President called "a mild well disposed man."

Bahadur Ally being obliged to return to his native country on account of ill health, Dalbracken got accommodation for him, as well as Davy Kirkland, on board the Commodore's vessel, resolving to continue his Oriental studies at sea.



The last business which Malcolm transacted in England was the execution of his "Covenant" as a writer in the Civil Service, by which he bound himself faithfully and diligently to serve the East India Company for five years, on an annual salary of ten pounds sterling. He signed the document without putting any questions. But the designation of his civil employment, and the sum by which its dignity was to be supported, caused him, who had still the peculiar notions of a young Laird, to smile and cast an enquiring look towards the President. "I perceive what you think," observed he: "every person on our establishments, Mr Guttlethorpe himself, began life as a merchant's clerk. But you do not foresee that when peace returns, and, as I trust, a sceptre comes into the Company's hands, our civil servants will become the vicegerents and ministers of a distant sovereign. Then shall you hear of the first gentry of the land, aye, the haughty nobles themselves, bending in the ante-rooms of Leadenhall Street to solicit for their sons these despised appellations of *Writer*, *Factor*, and *Merchant*."

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JAMES.—How should I mark the names of those Indian princes and princesses, that honest men living at home may call them aright as they read?

BROWNIE.—The names being Arabic, and therefore foreign, all natives of India do not pronounce them alike. A learned Oriental, for instance, would say *Jehàn Arà* and *Roshèn Arà*, as if the compound names consisted of two distinct words each, with accents on the last syllables. The common people, and most Europeans, pronounce them as if the owners had been Romans, *Jehanàra*, *Roshenàra*. The *a* is sounded as in *hall*, and the *u* as in *full*, in all the names.—*Dàra*, *Sùja*, *Moràd*.

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## CHAPTER IV.

THE sudden disappearance of Gilbert Vulpine, bringing down forever the castles which he had been building on the

Protector's favour, has now to be followed up in this narrative.

Silenced by the gag, and prevented from knocking by the cords on his limbs, the unhappy youth could make no sign of his unlawful imprisonment in the locked drawer of a sea-cot, and consequently lay very quiet within it, until he reached Captain Fluke's cutter. This fellow was a smuggler, who carried on every sort of contraband trade, in which money could be made, between the coasts of England and France. During the confusion of the Civil War, he was known to have kidnapped both men and women to sell as slaves to the Dey of Algiers. Conveying Madame de Boutade occasionally from one port to another in her migrations, she employed him only to evade justice and revenue.

This lady, when surprised by the celerity of Gilbert's approach with a warrant to apprehend her, was preparing to escape with all her valuables, but till then, had harboured no design against his personal liberty. On perceiving, however, that she must either relinquish a collection of jewels worth ten thousand pounds, not yet ready for removal, or act violently on the offensive, the fair voluptuary and robber treated him as I have stated. The orders of the Countess were to land Vulpine at Havre, where she went on shore, and let him go where he could no longer injure her. Fluke, nevertheless, after pocketting his reward, hearing of a Turkish vessel about to leave the harbour, pulled towards her in his gig, and sold the prisoner to the Mahomedan master, on conditions which promised him a handsome profit in the market of Stambol.

Vulpine was now all but certain of being doomed for life to slavery in fellowship with beasts of burden, never more to see any being dear to him. He felt as he had not done before since he was born. The place and years of his boyhood recurred as if to contrast the happiness of them with his present misery. His conduct to Maude and her brother now for the first and last time stung him with remorse. He wept in contrition, and prayed for mercy. The bigoted crew, dreading shipwreck from the orgies of an infidel on board, struck him with ropes-ends, and commanded silence, on pain of his

being thrown into the sea. This rude interference cooled the fervour which, like the fire kindled in the iceberg by some frozen lens, nothing but foreign and ordinary power could excite in his cold heart. Pains selfish alone can bring them to compassionate sufferers.

Gilbert was soon himself again; the ropes-end pressed him with strong doubt as to the expediency of professing Christianity where it subjected him palpably to much present evil. Looking about him with that disposition to accommodate his own proceedings to those of others, he observed that the Mussulman service was well performed by an old fellow who mumbled over the words in a manner which Bahadur Ally would on no account have tolerated.

No sooner, therefore, was the limb of the newly freed slave unfettered, than he was observed to join in the devotions of the crew. This unexpected provocation visibly disturbed the orisons of his owner and companion, who, though very pious in his way, by no means disposed to proselytize his property. Alleging the Christian's professions and ejaculations to be all profane mummeries to gain his freedom, which Moslem law declares he must convert, he determined to administer the Bastinado ever the service was finished. But, having gone through the ceremony in the most approved manner, the ex-bondsman, seating himself cross-legged amongst the crew, began to put his creed out of the power of interest and fanaticism to dispute. "God is great!" cried he, "the one God, and Mahommed is his prophet!" All were struck with astonishment as he went on discoursing devoutly what the priest pronounced the purest Arabic. "The unbegotten God, the shores of the infidels have been washed to the sea, and I am once again amongst the Faithful! do I dream? Say, O men! are ye like myself, holy or am I yet a miserable slave of Christians?" Being assured that all around him were true believers, he was completely overjoyed; and in the name of the Almighty intreated the assistance of a barber to shave the

his head and rectify the cut of his hair. His next step was to commend the liberality and penetration of the Turkish Captain, in having so providentially rescued from base captivity, one who was no less than a descendant of Mahommed himself, the son of a Mogul noble, whom the English infidels had carried away from India in his infancy. Long did they strive to convert him to their vile faith; but the blood of Fatima triumphed over their arts; and being unable to seduce him, they could do no more than sell the unchangeable Mussulman to his own friends, for which he ejaculated abundant praise. Every person vied with another in supplying orthodox garments, and suitable accommodation to the noble and interesting stranger.

Dalbracken, though very differently situated from his old companion, was destined also to have an uncomfortable voyage. Two hundred years ago it was a serious matter to be ten months at sea, no unusual period, in a floating prison, condemned daily and hourly to associate with such persons as then sailed to India. The master of a ship is and ought to be a despot on whom the comforts of all on board chiefly depend. None but good and able men should therefore be entrusted with so much authority.

Captain J. B. Webfoot was not merely an amphibious personage; he had two characters on land, and a third distinct from either, on salt water. He was a toady at the India House, an extravagant coxcomb in the society which he belonged to, and a brutal tyrant, gambler, and extortioner in command of an Indiaman. In his own words, however, he was "an Englishman every inch of him, and a sea officer too." This brief description comprised, in the seventeenth century, more arrogant self-sufficiency and exclusiveness than the rules of Almacks evince in the nineteenth. Acquiring his prejudices among a class of men who, unless raised above mediocrity by their Maker, are prone to sink beneath it, he thought himself privileged by birth and breeding to shew contempt for all foreigners and landsmen in his ship.

Dalbracken, known to be patronised by the President, was regarded by a Frenchman and Dutchman besides Bahadur Ally as their protector, though the Captain, having

previously taken out other young men similarly recommended and ill-treated them with impunity, stood in no awe of the Scotsman. Malcolm, like many of his compatriots, indulged a weak fondness for Scotland, such as children entertain for a mother, and respected equal love of country in his neighbours, without the quixotic intolerance of insisting on all men calling his fatherland peerless, yet, whenever it was abused, his feelings left him no alternative but to despise the libeller or resent his conduct. The other foreigners and he, being out-numbered ten to one, could only keep each other in countenance, without making head against the rest, as the daily jests enlivened the cuddy table. A fat leg of mutton would be "Dutch built:" a chicken "not so good as fricaseed frog;" and the Mussulman requested to carve the pork facetiously placed before him by the instructed servants.

David Kirkland escaped annoyance perhaps better than passengers of higher grade. Assigned a berth among lumber, and finding enough of space clear between it and the deck, he slung his hammock where none could come on pretence of work. In this unsteady resting-place, he lay on his back studying the universal language of India, formed amidst the Babel of all Asiatic tongues in the imperial camp, and thence called *Oordoo*. The student, after taking preliminary lessons from Bahadur Ally, began industriously to practise the utterance of strange words, book in hand. Though the throat performs an efficient part in the pronunciation of his mother tongue, David at first expectorated Arabic gutturals with great difficulty. For a week or two they came one by one from his chest in sounds a-kin to retching. Gradually, they issued like water gurgling by instalments from a long necked bottle, as the learner adroitly nodded his head to let them pass out. But before the voyage terminated, these uncouth noises changing to a sort of rumbling, flowed in a continued stream from Davy's lungs to his lips. He proved at last an expert linguist.

The Captain no sooner enthroned himself on board, and laid aside that politic restraint imposed upon his propensities on shore, than the consummate vanity, fierce arrogance, and egregious ignorance of the man were displayed. The ex-

hibition of knowledge which he did not possess, in other words, conversation about anything out of his own line, gave him offence: yet an avowal of defective information on a point which he knew, was treated by him with vociferous laughter. But notwithstanding this apparent want of matter, Captain Webfoot asserted his prerogative of talking most in his own ship; and, to entertain the party, he very frankly related innumerable instances of unequivocal partiality shewn to him by the first ladies in England, not to mention those of Portugal, Holland, and India, at the various settlements which he had visited. This history, were I to recite it, would prove that women have secret causes of preference known only to themselves. At least the Captain was not an Apollo in form, nor a Hercules either: but a lank dull-looking man, whose bile-tinged face, when it had any expression, seemed more threatening to damsels' purses than to their hearts. The attraction perhaps lay in his dress, which was most superb. He wore a naval uniform with a treble quantity of lace and bullion on week days, while Sunday beheld him in all the state of a peacock expanding his tail and inflating his throat. The Commander having no amusement except gaming, and he preferred winning, Dalbracken became first obnoxious, by declining to play, and thereby setting a mutinous example to other passengers. "The Scotch are a prudent people, they don't risk their cash, and I commend them!" the gay deceiver of the fair would say, winking, and thrusting his tongue into the cheek not seen by him thus taunted.—"Come, Mr Dalbracken, let us two shake our elbows a little bit, for love; not a farthing shall you stake—no! Well, faith, 'tis very right; if I had been like you, instead of the wild, careless, rake-hell chap that I am and was still more, why, I should have kept my money, and been a rich humdrum sort of fellow. Your man of spirit and pleasure is always poor—yes, you are right to be prudent Mr Dalbracken, let them laugh as they please."—"Sir," said Dalbracken, "I would rather not be told of any person's uncivil conduct which I have not experienced myself." This mild reproof had some effect. But one day when the Scotsman was enquiring the

names of different things, the repressed wit of the Captain broke out. "Pray," asked Dalbracken of one of the officers, "is that parapet musket proof?"—"Parapet!" screamed the Captain, "damn my blood if it is not the gunwhale he means, ha! ha! ha!"—"I am certainly ignorant," replied the other, "of almost every thing in a ship, and wish to know something from one who is willing to answer me." Then resuming his questions, "What is that high platform at the prow called?"—"Platform!" roared Webfoot, coming up and standing before them, convulsed with laughter, "Platform! Prow! Ha! ha! ha! Shiver my timbers if ever I heard the forecastle and the bow get such names since I cracked biscuit, ha! ha! Come here, boatswain, I say, what do ye call the platform and prow?"—"I never saw them in my born days, sir; I think that be landmen's lingo," answered the fellow, who knew his part, distorting his features into a grin also. The Captain redoubled his merriment. "Lord help us, Mr Dalbracken, where have you been all your life? Have not you a ship or two in Scotland?" A book of architectural plans being accidentally in the hand of one present, the ridiculed landsman opened it, and pointing to the capital of a column, "Captain Webfoot, may I ask you to tell me what order of architecture this is?" demanded he in a civil tone. "Order," replied the seaman, "the devil a one do I see; you mean a written order of course?"—"What kind of pillar is it, Captain?"—"Pshaw! what fuss is this? 'tis the picture of a brick and mortar pillar, and that is just the top of it to be sure. You want to humbug me, I suppose."—"I want to shew," rejoined the other, "that you know little more of a house than I do of a ship."—"Why, damn it, did not the very boatswain prove to you that we had no parapets and platforms on board?"—"Yes, sir, and if you will have the kindness to keep your temper, my friend Mr Bahadur Ally shall prove to you that the orders of architecture have other names besides brick and mortar pillars with tops to them." Spreading the engravings before him, the Mussulman, eager to shew his acquirements, began to demonstrate—"Corinthian, Ionian, Doric, Tuscan, Composite, Volute, frieze, architrave."—"Enough," said Dalbracken,

throwing down the book and walking away, as the Captain began to bellow thanks to God that he was no stone mason, nor a book-worm, to look at such stuff as some people did, who might know more things, for what he knew, than a free-born Englishman cared about; for his part, he had a white skin and English blood in his veins, which were satisfactory at any rate. The humiliation of being schooled by a despised Indian, before his officers and the boatswain himself, was not forgotten by Captain J. B. Wet-foot. The night proving rather stormy, poor Bahadur Ally having lain sea-sick and sleepless till daylight, crept upon deck just after it had been washed and dried. Finding a large chair, and tucking his feet under him like a tailor, in his own oriental posture, he sat down at one of the port holes to inhale the fresh air. He had scarcely entered on the indulgence of this luxurious compensation for rest, when the great man, approaching behind, pulled the seat from under him with a volley of abuse. "You impudent black scoundrel! how dare you bring your stinking hull to anchor on my quarter deck without leave? I'll tell you what, Blacky, if you do the like again (a disgusting oath), you shall marry the gunner's daughter." The stupified Mahomedan, hurt, but far more alarmed by the fall, lay prostrate for a good while, expecting something fatal to consummate the outrage. On finding that he was not to be murdered, he began to protest with ludicrous earnestness against a marriage which the two wives whom he had already, and the rest of his relations, he said, would be exceedingly averse to. The insult was nearly forgotten in the satisfaction which he felt on learning that the threatened nuptials meant only a flogging.

When Dalbracken heard the particulars of this occurrence, he saw no remedy. So he resolved on acting the part of a peaceful subject, though the resolution proved more difficult to keep than the uninitiated may suppose. He abridged his intercourse with the new sovereign, deporting himself coldly and civilly, as gentlemen are wont to a stranger. The captain talked at him, however, and found listeners too; for the most contemptible tyrants will have slaves. *He forbade the sailors to give the usual as-*



sistance so necessary to the comfort of a passenger, though seldom stipulated for: and directed the "foreigners" to be supplied with water from the worst casks, while in a state of fermentation. He farther stinted them of it in quantity. He directed their windows to be kept shut in the hottest weather; sent fellows to extinguish lights; and, in short, under pretence of its being requisite in working the vessel, he made their cabins thoroughfares. As both Dalbracken and Bahadur Ally used to retire immediately after dinner, Captain Webfoot and his party drank a standing toast on their departure—"Old England for ever, and damnation to her enemies!" then, as a supplement, in an under tone, "including Scotch and blacks."

This paltry system of persecution would have been almost intolerable had the first officer not been a man of sense and principle, whom such associates could not brutalize. To this gentleman, Mr Weatherall, the "foreigners," as invidiously designated, owed many favours and much civility. These acts of courtesy the worthy Commander endeavoured to appropriate; and through the very channel of him who conferred them, had the meanness to seek reconciliation with the offended parties towards the end of the voyage. Dalbracken, really despising his oppressor, without mentioning himself, drew up a plain statement of the treatment which Bahadur Ally had received, in a letter to Sir Josiah Child. He added, likewise, the case of a company's servant, at a place on the coast seldom visited by ships, who, when seemingly dying of a fever peculiar to the spot, which nothing but a sea voyage was thought capable of curing, had to pay as much for a passage of fourteen days, as others paid for their accommodation all the way from England, before the gold-contemning Webfoot would receive him on board. The Court of Committees deemed this extortion quite allowable, and, I believe, their decision has never been reversed. With that attention, however, which the authorities in Leadenhall Street generally bestow on the grievances of Asiatics, they threatened to dismiss Captain Webfoot from the service when he returned to Europe, on account of his tyrannical *and insulting* behaviour to a respectable native of India.

## THE EERIE LAIRD.

But the great deeds which he will be found performing hereafter, averted entirely the displeasure of his employers. Meanwhile, on casting anchor at Swally, the gay and gallant captain received from his friends the usual laudatory address and a piece of plate.

## CHAPTER V.

VULPINE, gaining by his superior acquirements complete ascendancy over the Turkish captain and crew, was landed at Constantinople, and conducted in religious procession to the Grand Mufti, who received him as a descendant of the Prophet, miraculously rescued from the hands of infidels. The inspired purchaser of his person, who could discover a true believer disguised in garments of the unbelieving, got ample pecuniary compensation in this life, and a revisionary promise of additional felicity in Paradise, for such meritorious service. The young Syud, who thought his proper name was Meer Jumla, caressed by the Sheikh ul Islam, patronized by the Sultan himself, and loaded with substantial gifts by all who venerated his descent or compassionate his misfortunes, was deputed by three score of pious Mussulmans to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca on their behalf, while visiting the shrine himself in progress to India.

The pilgrim thus equipped, having dropped his Christian character, name, and habiliments, and being no longer known to his former acquaintances, is entitled to have his transformation recognised. Many years elapsed before any of Bahadur Ally's scholars suspected the Asiatic robes of the Syud to cover Gilbert Vulpine.

After kissing the black stone, and crawling round the narrow enclosure at Mecca, the worthy Hadgi embarked in an Indian vessel which sailed from Judda on the Red Sea to Surat, which, from its constant intercourse with the Holy City, is called the door of Mecca. Meer Jumla here rested

to deliberate on future movements. He had converted the Turkish money so liberally bestowed on him into more portable precious stones and Venetian jewellery, then much prized: but what he hoped would prove more valuable still, he had a letter enveloped in choice embroidery from the chief of the Soonee faith, the Grand Turk to wit, to the imperial prince Aurungzeb, the great patron and protector of orthodoxy in India; besides another, from which something might also be expected, from the head vizier to the tributary king of Golconda. Introducing himself at the Factory, and at the Gardens, as jeweller from Constantinople, who could speak a little French, he made some good bargains with the ladies and young writers for his wares, while reconnoitring the place which promised nothing to detain him, and then he set off for Dowlatabad, where Aurungzeb resided. The prince received one so peculiarly recommended with open arms, and hugged him most affectionately. The state of Mecca, and legends of the Caaba, furnished appropriate matter for conversation to ingratiate two devotees with one another. The viceroy of the Deccan, cautiously exploring the acquirements and capabilities of the stranger, soon perceived that he was a more powerful instrument of good or evil than any in the long list of indigenous aspirants for employment in war or peace. Meer Jumla's arrival with a letter to the king of Golconda seemed an interposition of that Providence which watches over him who conforms to the Koran. The prince, looking with longing eyes to that rich kingdom and wealthy principalities adjoining, as containing the sinews of successful rebellion, was in want of a congenial spirit able to comprehend and execute his plan for getting possession of their treasures. His ultimate designs, however, were not yet unfolded. Under pretext that the king, a dissipated young man who left affairs of state to a mother of inferior fame, paid shamefully little attention to the religion of his subjects, while doing nothing to put down idolatry among the Hindoos of the Carnatic, a country nominally subject to his Majesty, the imperial reformer desired to reduce the whole government of Golconda to his own immediate

diate authority. To avoid bloodshed, a policy was to be adopted which should create a necessity for his interference in the name of Shah Jehan, the great Paramount, without requiring the expensive equipment of an army or an open declaration of hostilities. Meer Jumla, undertaking this pious work, was furnished with a "Purwannah," or, as the Turks call it, Firman; that is to say, an epistle from a superior to an inferior, recommending him to the queen-mother as a jewel merchant, ready to treat for a lease of the famous diamond mines; and besides, an accomplished votary of the true faith, who having seen distant countries, even Room (Turkey), where the chief of Islam reigned, would be happy if commanded to instruct her youthful son in the art of governing. One so highly praised by a prince whose opinion on religious men and things was infallible, and who had earthly power to enforce his will, necessarily obtained an honourable reception. Waiting on her Majesty, who, though concealed from him by an impenetrable curtain, chose to look through where it was slashed with convenient openings, he pleased her so much, that she signified her royal intention of appointing so excellent a person her peer, or spiritual guide. The wayward boy-king, however, dutifully submissive as he appeared to the voice of a mother in general politics, had already become very sensitive to certain ribald jests which he knew were in circulation about the queen's fondness for handsome young men. He accordingly put the royal veto on his mother's choice of a peer, at the risk of offending the imperial viceroy of the Deccan.

The meritorious individual thus rejected did not abandon the execution of his commission. The different names under which he was known at this period have led Indian historians into the error of reckoning him two or three distinct men. Some called him *Ameer Iranee*, from thinking him a Persian; Meer Jumla *Roomee*, or European Turk. For a brief space he used the patronymic *Vulpine* on his seal, after Oriental titles; and Mr Guttleshorpe, hearing his reader pronounce it in his way, *Wulpeen*, called him *Will* or *William Pin*. In fact the origin of this

distinguished personage always remained doubtful an age when India swarmed with foreigners from all parts of Asia and Europe, designated *Moguls* or *Belates* in common parlance meant men from distant countries with faces whiter than native Indians, nobody then could tell what region had given them birth, unless it were possible to discriminate one from another by such words as the foregoing. I shall henceforth denote him by the name of Meer Khan, which, along with others more lofty than his, was on his seal after the misfortune about to be mentioned, which he was reconciled to the king of Golconda.

He now took a survey of the Carnatic, a country which in one respect of Holland, but like it in many others, which he saw an industrious people at once preserve the soil from utter sterility, and rendering it exceedingly productive, by collecting the water which falls from the clouds during three continuous months only, and keep it in tanks for the irrigation of their fields throughout the year. It exhibited a scene of peace and industry, protected by a humble village police instead of a standing army.

Returning eastward along the coast, Meer Khan was for some time at Masulapatam, where the English had a factory, and small military establishment to guard the merchandize, or escort it from place to place. To the surprise of the ladies and gentlemen, he spoke English intelligibly, though critics with acute ears could detect an Asiatic accent in his pronunciation. He rose in the esteem of a scientific artillery officer, on evincing a knowledge never before observed in a barbarous Meer, which led the stranger to study several treatises on ballistics and gunnery. To encourage such laudable industry, he was also instructed in the mode of using the long and depressing guns, to make them throw balls so high as to be objects at any given distances. His instructor, a good scholar, had a beautiful young wife whom Meer was wont to accompany in her morning rides, and who, addicted to sleeping late, remained in bed. This habit was to be regretted, not only because horses

before breakfast, ere the sun becomes disagreeably hot, is deemed essential to European health in the East, but on account of what befel the lady in the absence of an affectionate husband. She and the Mahommedan gentleman having cantered rather far from Masulapatam, as it was in those days, were surrounded by a party of horsemen, and forcibly, though withal civilly, taken away to the fort of a predatory chief. This audacious fellow, who, strange to say, was known to have been previously on friendly terms with his Mussulman captive, shut up him and the English lady in one suite of apartments, where they remained, unknown to the inmates of the factory, for three weeks. The shameless depredator then sent a message to the Chief, that he was willing to liberate his prisoners for one thousand rupees. They forthwith obtained their liberty on the arrival of the money, which was promptly sent. The artillery officer received his recovered spouse with tears of joy, and thanked Meer Khan abundantly, for having made her incarceration more tolerable than it might otherwise have been. The wife, however, had an Irish cousin on the spot, who took a distressingly different view of the late occurrence. This passionate young gentleman being versed in the vulgar tongue of the district, and wont to converse with low natives, had managed to get an interview with the very menials who served in the dormitory of his relative's prison ; and believing them implicitly, he would not listen to argument. According to the jesters, from whom I am constrained to quote, he said to remonstrant friends, "I tell you the capture was no imprisonment at all at all, for I can prove that they were carried off by voluntary compulsion, and clapped into a jail for two, with but one bed. This Mr Meer Junnla, or whatever you call him, shall give me satisfaction, or by the holy poker I'll take it in a way that shall prevent him from seducing my cousin or any other virtuous woman a second time." The Hadgi refused to fight in a manner unknown to the faithful, and complained to the chief, of the Irishman's libellous tongue, which, albeit harmless to him, tended to injure the spotless character of a Christian lady. Meer Khan, despite of his disclamations and precautions, was way-

laid by the Hibernian, who, accosting him in company with two friends, forced the accused to draw in self-defence, or submit to ignominious treatment. The avenger of his cousin's honour executed his terrible threat, though, in recklessly rushing on to inflict an incurable wound, he was run through and disabled for life.

Meer Khan, returning to his quarters in the same fort, never again to be cheered by guilty love, continued there until he recovered sufficiently to resume, with unimpaired health, his projects of ambition.

At a private audience with the young king of Golconda, he prevailed on him to withdraw the interdict on the queen-mother's choice of a spiritual guide, and in due course, as the stranger's talents became developed, to raise him step by step to the highest post in his Majesty's dominions. Supported by an absolute sovereign, whose courtiers were expending their influence in mutual opposition, the foreigner, obnoxious to no particular faction, ascended the seat of power with the apparent approbation of the natives. Sudden promotions like this seem fabulous to the citizens of settled governments in Europe, but they are of frequent occurrence in the East. In order to be no longer recognised by the English, he changed his name and title to Meer Khan, now adding Vizier.

Assembling an army, he made an unexpected irruption into the defenceless Carnatic; defeated the Raja, as it was proclaimed, with great slaughter, and proportionate glory; burnt the towns, levelled the temples, and carried away the wealth of the vanquished idolaters. The rewards of valour, and the incense of bigotry, were lavished on the conqueror, whose fame extended to the extremities of India. The congratulations of Aurungzeb on this grand occasion led to a further communication of sentiments on various important subjects between these eminent men. The imperial prince, knowing the disposition of king Kootab, foresaw the result of these splendid services of his minister. For his Majesty of Golconda, being covetous of money to lavish on his pleasures, was not satisfied with the full acquisition of a valuable country. He wanted also that lion's share of the

booty which well-bred sovereigns give to the chief victor. Meer Khan demurred, and was plotting to get his treasure conveyed secretly to Dowlatabad, the residence of his friend the governor of the Deccan. This inclination to export ministerial property was treasonable in the eyes of Kootab, whose ancestors, of glorious memory, had been wont, time out of mind, to let the minister glut himself full at the cost of their loving people, when the prerogative was duly exercised, to make him disgorge his gain into the royal treasury. By fair and legitimate analogy, the same right extended to wealth acquired by desolating a foreign country, but the disaffected Vizier pretended to think otherwise. When unable any longer to evade the demands of his master, he shut the gates of a fort called Ramghur, containing all his valuables, claimed justice of Shah Jehan, as lord paramount, and implored the immediate assistance of Aurungzeb, the nearest representative of the emperor. The governor of the Deccan, perfectly prepared, announced that an envoy was on his way from Delhi with a message to king Kootab. Aurungzeb instantly set off in the character of this messenger, with five thousand horse; seized the person of the deluded king, who came out to meet the pretended mission, and was received into Meer Khan's fort of Ramghur. His army coming speedily up, he entered Hyderabad, the capital city, pillaging every house, public and private, until he had amassed an immense treasure, which supplied the principal means of realizing his future projects.

When intelligence of this nefarious aggression reached Delhi, Dara, who saw at once that it was committed to secure funds with which to oppose him, prevailed on his father to reprimand Aurungzeb severely for violating the sacred character of an imperial envoy; for plundering the dominions of an unoffending tributary, with whose internal affairs the emperor disclaimed any right of interference, and command his son to restore what he had taken, leaving the king and his minister to adjust their differences agreeably to the usages of the state. This mandate arrived before the pillage was half over. The prince immediately returned an answer, breathing reverence and implicit sub-



mission to his parent and sovereign, but did not desist from the work of spoliation until he had seized every rupee and diamond above ground. Meer Khan felt rather more disappointment than he chose to express when his money in Ramghur was added to the rest of the spoil. "Our fortunes are now one," said Aurungzeb very complaisantly, "and a single treasury will suffice for both."

Having now provided himself with sufficient resources to dispute the succession for one or two campaigns, he only hesitated how to begin. Cautious in extreme, he did not choose to trust any of his countrymen, most of whom had lived at the Imperial Court, and many of them were discarded adherents of his rivals. As he daily reiterated his wishes to live and die in religious retirement, his most intimate friends believed him really inclined to go to Mecca. But when he received into his counsels a distinguished foreigner of extraordinary acquirements, whose fortune lay in pawn, and by whom there appeared no chance of betrayal, the Prince, after acquiring, by innumerable artifices, the unfeigned good will of Meer Khan, disclosed his designs on the throne to him.

The stranger was inwardly surprised at the simplicity of his new master's original plan of operations. It seemed indeed the mere counterpart of that which succeeded in his own case against Golconda. The governor appearing willing on certain conditions, to surrender the fort of Agra, where Shah Jehan then resided, Aurungzeb proposed to overrun the intermediate country, and advancing rapidly to the seat of government, seize the person of the old emperor, and rule in his name. Suspecting the proposal to be made as a test of his judgment, the confident recommended him not to trust another traitor in an affair of such moment. "Suppose we make our way through the scattered force in Malwa, the warlike Morad, with the army of Guzerat, is on our rear, and the whole of the imperial troops under Dara in Ajmeer, on our flank; your highness will not surely consider the probable fidelity of a faithless man, as counterbalancing our inferiority in strength, and disadvantage of position?" The Prince, casting up his eyes, began to rumi-

ate like one drawn suddenly into a new train of thought. "Could the neutrality or co-operation of Prince Morad not be gained?" enquired the Councillor. There was much difficulty in answering the question. "He is a giant in battle, but a baby everywhere else," said Aurungzeb. This leading to a long discussion on the vain, childish, yet martial character of the governor of Guzerat, both concurred in thinking it of the last importance, and withal possible, to make him an instrument towards the overthrow of Dara and Suja, after which they anticipated few obstacles in setting himself aside. Aurungzeb, who had not many of the infirmities of mediocrity, never rejected cogent advice or an efficient measure, because it was not his own, and needed no assistance in dictating the mode of executing a subtle scheme. Perceiving a congenial spirit capable of any deflection for the attainment of a great object, various accomplishments unknown to Indians, and a light suavity of manners in Meer Khan, which fitted him admirably for the employment, Aurungzeb resolved to send him as an envoy to his younger brother. This mission, to negociate the alliance projected by their united wisdom, was cordially undertaken by the late Vizier of Golconda.

In due time he departed for Ahmedabad, with some articles in addition to the usual presents betokening submission, more suitable to the character of the receiver than the giver. They consisted of two beautiful slave girls, and a chest of French brandy, with a gold cup holding about two ounces, in which it might be drunk. The envoy, in proffering the homage of his master, was instructed to promise his poor assistance to Morad, in asserting the right of his transcendent genius in war, to inherit the throne of Timur. This Prince, of a peculiarly frank and unsuspecting disposition, heard the communication with rapturous satisfaction. He signified his intention to bestow millions, instead of the pittance solicited by the governor of the Deccan, who proposed to spend his whole life in religious seclusion, after seeing the empire subjected to the sway of so illustrious a brother. Every stipulation was agreed to as soon as mentioned. When all the business had been finished, and more done on his behalf than Aurungzeb ventured to ask, the envoy

became so great a favourite, that Morad importuned his brother to let him remain in Guzerat. The only miscarriage of intention attending the negociation, appeared in his eager liberality, which conceded more than suited the purpose in view, and most alarmingly, in the precipitancy with which, consulting nobody, the young man proclaimed himself emperor of the Moguls. He assumed the style of Akbar the *Second*; the numeral appellative being *Sani* in Arabic, induced those of the English who were indifferent oriental scholars, to believe his name was *Sawney*. Aurungzeb having thus adopted the policy of making one competitor a cat's paw, easily conceived the expediency of extending it to another. Suja was next called on as the only one of the family whose abilities entitled him to reign, to lose no time in putting down the infidel Dara, and the boy Morad, who had audaciously taken the imperial title. Besides the small retiring pension, the pious adviser stipulated for his services, in this instance, that the future emperor should renounce his heresy, resuming the true faith of his ancestors on mounting the throne. Suja, without crediting for an instant the sincerity of these professions, affected to receive the message as the admonition of a holy man to perform a sacred duty to his progenitors and to India. He accordingly declared his readiness to take the field with the army of the Deccan as his auxiliaries; hoping, in fact, to foil Aurungzeb at his own game.

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## CHAPTER VI.

DALBRACKEN, leaving the ship at Swally and embarking in a boat, reached Surat early next morning. He found the writers, his compeers, bustling about with pens behind their ears, all wearing Mahommedan dresses, and busily engaged in directing the disposal of merchandise. The establishment, at this time, consisted of twenty covenanted servants, besides the chief, who exercised a general control over the

subordinate stations, of which the Company had many, in different parts of India. Deputies from the whole of these places, as wont every year in the month of October, were now assembled to render an account of their proceedings, and to receive the instructions of their general superintendent. The stranger, expressing some impatience to wait on Mr Guttlethorpe, was informed that he and all the party not on duty, resided at "the Gardens," which were three miles distant. One of the gentlemen very kindly ordered a horse, and offered an Indian dress, which last Dalbracken, politely declining, mounted a little animal, splendidly bedecked with Hindostanee trappings, and set off at a brisk amble, or rather waddle, under the guidance of a groom. The road unluckily lay through the town. A jargon of various abuse now assailed his ears from all sides: "Pork eater! Cow-killer! Infidel! Yoursister's naughtiness!" and fifty degrading epithets besides, were lavished upon him, each orator displaying his peculiar taste. "Your honour," said the groom, "had better not wear hat and breeches in public for the future."

Bahadur Ally having remained behind, to take care of his European curiosities, was here missed by Dalbracken, who wished to shew him how many Webfoots the first step in India had disclosed. Emerging from the streets, he felt confidence and pleasure, it is difficult to say why, on seeing the proud mausoleums of Britons, who, perishing here, reposed under domes with flanking towers and cupolas that shone vainly emulous of the last abodes of Eastern princes. Farther on he caught a distant glimpse of what brought to mind the description of an oasis in the desert. Amidst a dreary landscape, on both sides of the river, a grove appeared on the high bank of the Taptee, consisting of evergreens of many shades, sprinkled with palm-trees, that lifted their naked stems and crowns of foliage far above the rest. At irregular distances, the white walls of European buildings reflected the bright sunshine through the surrounding masses of verdure. "Yonder," cried the conductor, as they kept advancing; "yonder is the house of the Chief!" The mansion thus indicated, standing on an eminence, and further elevated by a lofty terrace, grew more and more

conspicuous. It was of two storeys, and a parallelogram in form. The lower apartments were protected from heat and rain by an ample colonaded veranda, the Doric shafts of whose pillars sustained Corinthian capitals in the full luxuriance of the order. Balconies in the same style above, gave the whole an air of grandeur. It were tedious to describe the commodious and spacious interior. Besides, a minute account of Mr Guttlethorpe's establishment might hurt the feelings of his successors, in that part of India, by shewing the world how much they have retrograded in whatever is useful or ornamental in domestic economy. The room in which the servants were now arranging breakfast, was sixty feet by thirty-two, with the ceiling displaying the painted joists, at a proportionate height. A punkah, or swinging fan, occupying more than one half of the length of the apartment, hung during the cold season in gay repose over the table. Four doorways opened on either side, and two on each end. Those communicating with the outside, had doors folding inward, of which two-thirds were of glass : and frames containing Venetian blinds, all green, now appeared spread to right and left on the outer wall. In the space between these two was Mr Guttlethorpe's most original improvement in economics, which is now familiarly known as a fixed or standing cheek ; that is to say, an oblong frame of wood with thin strips or withes of the split bamboo extended from side to side, horizontally, which are crossed by pieces of twine descending perpendicularly from end to end. Being neatly finished and coloured, it forms an elegant screen, pervious to the wind, whilst it excludes flies and thousands of insects that would otherwise infest the house. This stately building, as already intimated, stood in a garden comprising seven acres, and was entirely enclosed by a brick wall, plastered and white-washed. At each angle frowned a bastion : a ditch also threw its security round the mansion : and over the formidable gateway, from a tall flag-staff, the red cross of Saint George streamed unheeded by the heathen. Under the arch of this portal passed Dalbracken on his palfrey of the East, rolling along like a duck *in haste*. He entered a winding avenue of acacias in blos-

som and fragrance, when the song of the Maulies or Indian gardeners, for the first time, met his ears, as their oxen, working two Persian wheels, discharged water from the wells, which men were conducting to beds teeming with various esculents of Asia and Europe. His eye wandered delighted over the fruit and foliage of orange and lime-trees, blending their hues before him: arcades of bamboo, supporting luxuriant vines: the famed Eastern roses, and the jessamin, in their native country growing in wanton profusion. A gradual turn brought a small tiled house in view, and a sentry, in the Company's uniform, guarded the door of its inclosure. "Can this be a frolic of taste?" said the new-comer to himself. He was answered by the grunting and squeaking that arose, when presently a herd of over-fed swine, of all ages and sexes, within the area, attracted his astonished eyes. Following the road, he soon left the porkers behind, and saw in front a specimen of Oriental architecture, which to him was a striking novelty. The part which presented itself to view, consisted of two parallel towers terminating in marble domes and connected by an Indian colonnade, over which a canopy, resembling an inverted boat, seemed to hang in the air. The outer curve of this arch, and the domes, bore gilt pinnacles, which flamed in the bright sun-shine. The lesser ornaments gave the whole a character which Dalbracken thought *fairy Gothic*. It looked like a thing ready to spring from the ground and fly at a magician's bidding. Smiling at the whimsicality of placing this elegant structure to be seen immediately after a pig-sty,—“What sort of cattle are kept here?” enquired he. “It is the Haram, sir; the Ranee lives there,” replied the intelligent groom who continued to lead the way. Dalbracken now dismounting in front of the house, which was of course on its north side, ascended several steps, and addressed himself to a mace-bearer who conducted him to the interior. Elbowing his way through a crowd of ladies and gentlemen in gay European dresses, he at last beheld the servant face about, speaking to one, who, advancing, accosted the stranger with outstretched hand,—“Welcome, my dear sir, most welcome to Surat! I fear your voyage along the

coast has been tedious and disagreeable." Unprepared for such frankness and attention before either his name or person were known, the young man could only bow, avoiding articulate thanks, until he felt sure of having got the compliment for himself. Perceiving this, the chief proceeded,—"The honourable member for Calicut, I presume?"—"I have come direct from England, sir, as this letter will more particularly inform you," replied the other, delivering his credentials. Glancing at the superscription, including their names,—“Mr Dalbracken,” resumed the imperturbed lord of the mansion, “I am delighted to see you well, and I thank our President for bringing me acquainted with one whose appearance promises so much.—Eurasia, my dear, receive our friend here; Mr Dalbracken, my daughter!” On he went introducing him to Mrs Batta, lady of the Colonel Commandant, and to her sister, Lady Ludgate, the widow of a London Alderman, who fell like a Cavalier in the service of King Charles II. Her ladyship came out to her relatives, in charge of Miss Eurasia, to live quietly where no republicans would persecute, said she, though wags alleged her to be in search of another husband. While the chief examined the dispatch, Dalbracken encountered the brightest eyes in the room, submitting with great good will to an eager inquisition on the part of the ladies. They wanted to know precisely all that had passed, was doing, and to be done, in England. So satisfactorily did he answer these interesting questions, that, in ten minutes, the fair inquisitors unanimously thought him a decided acquisition to the society of Surat. Mrs Batta, anxious to revisit “dear old England,” asked a thousand things respecting the expense of living there, and spoke disparagingly of the country which she desired to leave.—“What an artificial existence,” she exclaimed, “we lead here! Even now one cannot stir out in the sun to breathe fresh air, and half the year our houses are like dark prisons, doors and windows blocked up with tatties, wet screens, sir, to make the parching hot weather at all endurable.” The young lady, called Eurasia, looking like a beautiful child broken loose from the nursery, had been standing with one

arm over Lady Ludgate's shoulder, and playing with a wreath of flowers in the other hand, when, without looking any graver, she now answered Mrs Batta: "My dear lady," said she, "we have too much heat here, and they have too much cold there; but I think that is all the difference as to climate: for one lives just as artificially beside a sea-coal fire, with doors and windows too close shut to let in fresh air, as when that punkah swings above the table within, and the wind is cooled outside before it reaches us." The girl must repeat somebody's words, thought the stranger. But as her opponent responded, the defender of India rejoined—"Oh, no, Mrs Batta, I do not say that Europe is not preferable on other accounts. If you want gay parties, where wise and witty people meet to please one another—if you want to see plays or operas—to read new romances and poetry, or to look at paintings, you must go away from us, I fear, but not to England, in Oliver's reign; and I would as soon stay in Surat as in France." The youthful widow, the most attentive to Dalbracken, appealing to his blooming and healthful appearance, in proof of the salubrity of Europe and a sea voyage, insinuated one or two personal compliments to his great horror.—"Just look round the room," added she, "and remark the difference between him and all the rest of the gentlemen."—"Do you think," said Eurasia, "that all gentlemen look alike in England?"—"Not at all, my dear," replied her Ladyship, as if eager to retract indirect dispraise, "I did not say that any of them would look so well as Mr Dalbracken anywhere." At this the young lady, putting her arm round the speaker's neck, said, in a tone of playful condolence, "Dear Lady Ludgate, I would not see you hurt for the world; do accept of this." Her ladyship's hand closed before she observed it, on some heart's-ease, as Eurasia skipped to the other side of the apartment in a peal of laughter.

While considering how to extricate himself from such a foolish predicament as he now stood in, both of his hands were seized at once—"Cambridge! Bethel! Is it possible?" The latter he found had resided with the Chief since his return from the Deccan, and their friend was come on a mis-



sion from Hoogly, to announce the failure of his negotiation for the cession of Bengal. Nothing could be more cordial and affectionate than the meeting of the young men. A more extraordinary character, however, now entered on the stage, by whom time is pregnant with mighty deeds. A flashily dressed person had been observed moving round and round, making ducking bows to the ladies, and asking questions while directing his eyes to the stranger. His air had an odd mixture of importance and diffidence, shewing him little acquainted with the formalities of genteel society, though he seemed determined to win the graces by storm. "Dalbracken," said Cambridge, "allow me to introduce my friend, Mr Steelbow, lately of the Dutch military service."—"May I make bold to inquire, sir," asked he, "if you know my fellow soldier, as one may say, Captain Dalbracken, formerly of Leslie's horse?"—"I am his son," answered Dalbracken, "and I doubt not you are the brave friend who saved his life at the battle of Worcester." He took the soldier's hand, and in return had his own shaken almost to dislocation. His father's unfeigned gratitude, the name of the old horse, and many stories heard at the castle fireside, made this a welcome recognition. But more serious business now awaited all. Mr Guttlethorpe having finished the President's letter, was approached by the Kansummah, or steward of the household, who with joined palms reported breakfast on the table.

The ample board appeared, as they entered, groaning under a long array of magnificent plate, and of sumptuous dishes, which in England are seen only at dinner. A massy epergne of silver, elevated on a plateau in the centre, exhibited in baskets protruded from the vestibules under its cupola, every choice fruit of the season, imbedded in the fresh leaves of its parent tree. But the fare in all its savoury richness, was nothing to the arch pleasantry with which the host recommended it.—"Do take one of these delicate pork chops! The genteel and liberal education of my pigs is well known. Ha! the rogues know where to put a good thing. Steelbow, just before helping yourself to that morsel for a king, two inches of pure white! pray, send Mrs Batta the

charming crackler yonder, I mean that bit of brisket, in a hot water plate—don't be cool to a lady, Steelbow."—"Mr Dalbracken, let me recommend a little of the Rhoo Mutchee, or carp of Indostan proper; you wont rue it, I assure you."—"Now, let me for once offer a dry looking fellow to your ladyship's notice! The genuine Tupsee Mutchlee of the Ganges, vulgarly but improperly called Mungo Pease—no gallant ever gave his ladye-love so sweet a kiss as Mungo, ha! ha!"—"Come, Eurasia, help John there, I mean Mr de Jungle, who has been casting a hungry look at them in vain; and for heaven's sake give Jiger some leisure to eat! Why, girl, you talk at such a rate, one might think that you as well as the fish were *tipsy*."—"By the bye, Cambridge, you tell me my old friend, Jack Cramwell, lives excellently well yet; pray, does he enjoy these same mango fish in perfection, fresh from their native stream?"—"Mr Cramwell, sir, has the reputation of improving; he cooks curries of white ants and locusts with his own hands, which are pronounced inimitable; and such is his zeal for mango fish, that though partial to sound sleep, he gets roused during the whole season at one o'clock in the morning, to dress and eat them as soon as brought in by the fishermen who return with the tide."—"Bravo, Jack!" cried the Chief; "my dear old crony, nothing changed! How fortunate he is at Hoogly! What would I not give to sit down with him once again, and see the dear little fellows wallop alive out of the basket into the frying-pan!"—"But," continued he, looking seriously, "it is needless to repine, we must just be satisfied in the West here, with dried and pickled mango fish."

Mr Guttlethorpe spoke from the heart. Throughout the spacious East, Apicius had not so ardent a disciple. The joy which he felt in devouring his sapid luxuries overflowed abundantly in words; yet he derived at least equal enjoyment from the gratification which his dishes imparted to others. With the zeal of an apostle too he sought for converts, and was wont to like his friends nearly in proportion as they gorged his viands. Practice, however, and practical measures, not theoretical devotion, were what won his approbation at the trencher, where long experience had taught

him absolutely to distrust verbal praise. Mr Steel having this talent of pleasing in an extraordinary degree stood at present very high in favour. The progress in of this soldier of fortune is somewhat singular. K Charles being unable to maintain such attendants after flight to the Continent from the battle of Worcester, recommended Steelbow as a young man that had shewn himself worthy of a commission, to a German prince, who promptly well, enrolled the Englishman as a private, and finally him, with the regiment to which he belonged, to the Stadtholder General of Holland. Their high-mightinesses sent purchased troops to Java. Steelbow still occasionally urging his claims to promotion, on being detached to a Dutch factory at Surat, seemed to find the principal factor disposed to listen to his story. But then Mynheer Von Blom proposed, as the price of a commission, that he should, pretending desertion to the English, learn by spying and eavesdropping what part they were going to take in the quarrel of the Great Mogul's family, and come back with the information; the soldier, in revenge for being put on dishonourable duty, deserted in earnest, and divulged the treachery of the Dutchman to Mr Guttlethorpe. This conduct was reckoned highly patriotic, as each of the rival establishments had been in the habit of intriguing to get the other turned out of the country. The discovery of his personal accomplishments, which now followed, induced Mr Guttlethorpe to promise Steelbow an ensigncy or cornetcy in the levies.

There was present at this memorable breakfast another person, afterwards renowned, who won his way to fortune likewise by well-timed mastication. Mr John de Junco, so named by the whim of his father, was the son of a deceased factor by a native woman. Educated to instil the ingenuous youth of Surat, the future preceptor was not a profound English and Oriental scholar in all that books impart, but he knew almost nothing of the European world. Invited originally to the Chief's Christmas feasts, out of respect to his parent, and in acknowledgment of his Christianity, the neglected orphan found an opportunit

distinguish himself. By ingeniously starving for a day before-hand, he was enabled to devour everything recommended by his patron with exemplary dispatch. This courtiership finally procured him a weekly invitation on Sunday. Of late he had been called on to resign the office of schoolmaster, and to acquire by diligent study proficiency in the composition of military dispatches, in order to qualify himself to communicate the events of the ensuing war, in a form fit to be laid before the high authorities in England. Mr de Jungle, furnished with several volumes of approved models, now laboured assiduously to become worthy of his destiny.

Michael de Sylva was of the same age, and almost the synonyme of the preceding gentleman, whose father was accused of forestalling the name ; both boys coming into the world while their parents were traversing the forest of Malwa in quest of cheap cotton beyond it. They were in consequence familiarly designated Jack of the Jungle and Mike of the Wood. Michael, descended maternally of a Sartorian family, had for many years no prospect of higher employment than that of tailor to the settlement, and contractor for the clothing of the battalion. Early indications, however, of martial genius flashing through the obscurity of his condition, it is said, obtained for him the post of serjeant-commandant of the artillery company, shortly subsequent to his father's accession to a seat in the Court of Committees. He had almost immediately an opportunity to shew himself worthy of this elevation. An audacious river pirate having boarded one of the Company's pattimars, or small barges, was making off with some valuable property, right opposite the Factory, when the chief artillerist directed a four-pound shot from one of the guns so very near their boat that the plunderers leaped into the water and abandoned the spoil to the true owners. He was therefore most justly put on the list of those now to be made commissioned officers ; and as a preparatory step, the Chief gave him a seat at his table. Mike was reputed as studious of gunnery as his friend of delineating victories. But speaking less, indeed using only the needful expressions, " Yes," " No,"

"Very well;" most people considered him a deep thinker, and regarded him respectfully, as he sat always at the same corner, bolt upright, smoking a long snake Hookah.

But by far the most important personage was the hero of English India, on whose crest Hope now sate with outspread wings; that is to say, Major Simon Dressup, selected by general approbation to execute the gigantic project of Sir Josiah Child in Guzerat. I never knew a state or government too insignificant to boast of an invincible army: and the gentlemen of Surat were firmly of opinion that no troops in the East could match their battalion. Many of their victories were recorded over robbers and pirates, numbers of whom had been reported desperately wounded by the warriors of the Factory. The most brilliant exploit of this esteemed band, however, was that in which Captain Dressup acquired his renown. A party of Maharatta horsemen in the service of their first sovereign, the famous Sevajec, one day entered the town, butchering and pillaging the inhabitants in defiance of the castle garrison. The tumult came nearer and nearer, and at last the Factory itself was declared in danger. The major-commandant being at the Gardens, the sagacious captain drew up his men on the rampart: and when the enemy arrived within shot, he advanced his line to the parapet, making the whole pour a volley into the drove of plunderers, with such regularity, that it was taken for the report of a cannon. Consternation and flight spread through the Maharattas, who galloped away at the speed of their horses. The Mogul governor rewarded the victor with a dress of honour. The Court of Committees thanked and promoted him to the rank of field-officer. So little do the personal appearance and the fame of great men correspond sometimes, that Dalbracken, not yet introduced, took the major for some frolicsome person in masquerade. This arose from the gallant officer's laudable exactitude in matters of discipline. At this time he wore a coat about half a foot too short in the sleeves, and so tight when buttoned that it impeded respiration. "It would be most unsoldier-like," said he, "to deviate from positive orders, which require me to dress

agreeably to the muster." So his tailor measured the pattern and not his person. Major Dressup had been for a considerable time engaged in drilling and exercising five new battalions and two regiments of cavalry, constituting the regular troops which he was shortly to lead against the enemy.

In the young lady, who was seated opposite him at table, Dalbracken had no difficulty to recognise the daughter of the Rajpoot princess. Eurasia's birth, person, prospects, and not less a peculiarity of female character, rendered her an object of extraordinary interest. No man could behold her with indifference, nor with unmixed feelings of approbation. Her form, though slender and elfine, possessed an air of dignity and elegance, in spite of unregulated manners. Pure white predominated greatly in her dress, whilst raven hair, glossy and abundant, curling on each side of the forehead, descended to the shoulders, and mantled in ringlets over a full bosom. An ignorance or disregard of art, in ordinary attitudes and in the arrangement of female ornaments, gave to her whole appearance that of perfect womanhood in a state of infantine simplicity. Her voice was, perhaps, a greater anomaly still. With tones of entrancing softness, it mingled notes harsh as the scream of her native peafowl, so irregularly that the hoaxed and dissatisfied ear had not time to dwell on the one till it was startled by the other class of sounds. After talking good sense, full of original observation, till fools looked grave, she would burst into a fit of immoderate giggling, at anything or nothing, so hilariously, that the wisest felt compelled to partake of her levity.

At intervals, wit and wisdom too broke from Eurasia's lips, as music bursts from the strings of an Eolian harp in a varying wind. What she uttered neither made nor left any impression on herself, and no external token denoted it her own. It seemed, like the electric fluid known in these days, to accumulate in her, and to flash out independently of her volition, agreeably to its own laws. Her abrupt manner of changing a topic of conversation, was not more remarkable than the intense eagerness of her discourse. From theme to theme, from person to person, she skipped, as a bird, in

its gladsome caprice, flies from one tree to another, without following any path, or leaving a trace behind to mark the transition. Yet frankness, verging on silliness, and an unvarying expression of pleasure, stamped all this strange creature's conduct with ingenuousness. Eurasia's face, oval and delicate, though not thin, was almost overcharged with animal vivacity. The mild Hindoo, and the bolder European features, blended there without one harsh line of junction. Her eyes, unlike those of either father or mother, were large, prominent, bright as dew-drops, and of a dark hazel colour. So quick were they that no person ever attempted a furtive glance at her undetected.

The complexion of this singular girl was not darker than that of most Spaniards and Italians; and the Rajpoot race, whence she derived it, have finer lineaments than the Moors had to impress on the Goths.

Miss Guttlethorpe was generally called, both by Europeans and natives, the *Sahibzadee*; a term meaning literally *gentleman's daughter*, and now applied to all unmarried young ladies of her class in the East.

Beside the *Sahibzadee* sat Mr Patrick Jiger, "a civil servant of high rank," next in dignity to the Chief himself. This gentleman, imitating the Mussulmans, wore whiskers and mustaches, monopolizing two-thirds of a long thin face. His age did not exceed thirty-five, though it seemed fifty—an appearance principally derived from his unalterable gravity. Yet Mr Jigger, fond to excess of most light amusements, spent much of his time in attendance on the ladies, with whom he played on the fiddle, displaying his highest accomplishment, and practised difficult dances. He manifested little inclination for sedentary business at the Factory, but had long been known as a mighty traveller to the remotest places, going at the rate of seventy or even eighty miles a day on a camel. He did not excel in the eloquence of words, nor of eyes either. But the activity of his head and hands seemed now to supply every deficiency, as he nodded and gesticulated to the young lady, mixing eggs in a wine-glass with due quantities of red pepper, black pepper, and salt, which he presented to her in a manner that appeared

to himself the perfection of graceful politeness. If any austere person pronounce Mr Jiger a coxcomb, be it recorded that he was so only in trying to please others, not in arrogating consequence to himself.

When the ladies retired, Mr Guttlethorpe, taking his guest by the arm, led him into a suite of apartments. "Now, Mr Dalbracken," said he, "this is your home for the present, make yourself comfortable; every man of mine has orders to obey you. So help yourself, young gentleman, and do not wait to be pressed, to what you want—no thanks." The Chief's hour of gaiety being over, he now began to look exceedingly serious. As he stood on the floor, Dalbracken imagined that he saw as many contrasts in the father's figure as in the daughter's conduct. The chief Factor, who, by the way, first cashiered the noun as a superfluity, was in his forty-eighth year. His countenance bespoke the good nature which really belonged to him, blended, I may say amalgamated, with habitual sensuality. His hair, undiminished in quantity, had become, not grey, but entirely white. All the flesh and fat of his cheeks apparently deserted their post to swing in a huge bag under the chin, leaving the upper portion of his face wrinkled and yellow. A round protuberant belly, in like disproportion, overhung his lank thighs and spindle-shanks. "Behold the romantic lover of an Eastern princess!" ejaculated his new acquaintance inwardly, "but we have seen nothing of the great Oriental Statesman yet." The budget was just opening. "Sit down," said the Chief. "I find you know all our state secrets already; so I will give you a sketch of the posture of affairs." Then, though not a being was within hearing, he began to whisper, as becomes the political character. "Old Shah Jehan," continued he, "is going very fast, and we must soon be in the thick of it. Willy-a-Head, as they call Prince Dara, the son and heir, who is, moreover, Lord of Surat, has negotiated with me, through the Governor of the Castle here; and, of course, I have promised him all the troops that we can muster. But still, you see, the question is, whether some one of his younger brothers is not more likely to get the crown. There is Suja, now master of Bengal, might have been made our



best friend by good management ; but, between ourselves, he has choused Cambridge, who is no match for him. I foresaw it clearly. Why, how could a griffin, that is a new comer, and a doctor, succeed in a business that I should have been slow to undertake myself, with all my experience and knowledge of the natives ? So that business is dished. Next is my friend Morad, Governor of Guzerat, who has actually proclaimed himself king by the name of Sawney. He, God bless him ! will give us a province, or anything for the asking, if we only assist him with our artillerymen, and cast balls and shells. For, they have nothing of the kind among themselves, you must know ; as they use hammered pieces of iron and hollowed stones instead of them. But great warrior as he is, this Prince is not very steady, and being the youngest son, if he fail, we shall be ruined for aiding and abetting rebellion. As for him of the Deccan, Aurungzeb, he is a man of a religious turn, who is determined to go to Mecca, as soon as the breaking of heads begins. Yet, out of friendship to both, he advises me to join King Sawney. The youngster having sea-coast to give immediately, I incline to take this advice ; because a bird in hand is worth two in the bush. Princes, however, are only men, as we say in Persian ; ‘ *Faridoon the happy was not an angel.*’ Of the two promising competitors, I should prefer the heir apparent ; but he cannot give us an acre until we help to put him on the throne ; and if he never get it at all, the conqueror would turn us neck and heels out of the country. As there is, you perceive, no certainty in any way, I shall take Ovid’s advice, my friend, which you may recollect—‘ *Thou shalt go safest in the middle.*’ It is a noble maxim. I propose this very day (lowering his voice still more) to write each of the parties—namely, Dara, Suja, and Morad in the secret department, that the troops which he knows are getting ready will assist him. No harm in that, you know, whatever turns up. Meanwhile I have formed an alliance with that rascalion Savajee, the freebooting Raja, and secured a couple of Christian renegades—the very best generals that they have—to join the company whichever side we take. Your countryman is one of them.

You have heard, I dare say, of Jacob Benjamin Leith who now commands at Cambay? The other is called a Greek, Turk or Persian, but he is, I suspect, a European, and most likely an Englishman. He is, or rather was, called William, which the native scribes write Will, Pin. Now, Ben Leith and Will Pin cannot bring less between them than forty thousand men, which, added to our seven thousand regulars and fourteen thousand irregulars, with twenty pieces of artillery, will, I flatter myself, make such an army under such a leader—Dressup, to wit—as India has never seen, to beat down the weakest competitor; in other words, the greatest rebel.”

This lengthened harangue left Dalbracken sadly puzzled what to think of Mr Guttlethorpe. He seemed to understand the interest of his employers, though the means by which he proposed to maintain it appeared scarcely worthy of a great statesman. But having heard of expediency and existing circumstances under the names which they bore in those days, he justly ascribed his inward aversion from crooked policy to ignorance of public affairs, and the established mode of conducting them.

His two friends entering as soon as Mr Guttlethorpe retired, “Well,” said Cambridge, “are you admitted to the Chief’s confidence? in other words, did he look grave and quote his two adages?”—“Yes, Latin and Persian.” Both were familiar with the quotations; but Bethel observed that Cambridge had lost the confidence, which hearing them implied, by imprudently making light of Ovid’s wisdom. “The middle course,” said he, “between the foot pavement and the cart-road, is the gutter.”

Malcolm now begged to be told how the negotiations planned by the President of Committees had succeeded. Cambridge spoke highly of the urbanity and magnificence of Prince Suja, to whom he had been accredited. This accomplished viceroy introduced the envoy in his character of Physician, to the Houri of Rajmahal, and conversed much with him on the policy and manners of Europe. The English being then little known, and of slender pretensions as a martial people in the East of India, Suja inwardly

smiled at their presumption in offering to furnish an army commanded by their own officers ; and seeing no prospect of supplies of ready money or munitions of war from the Factory, he good humouredly evaded any serious recurrence to the demand of provinces, after once putting a negative on the cession of territory. The most valuable commodities to him which Europeans dealt in were French wines, which he preferred to Shiraz ; and young women of very fair skins and red cheeks, which he and his Persian comrades exceedingly admired, after discovering that the ladies, despite appearances were not lepers. The living gallery of Rajmahal comprised two specimens from the Point of Portsmouth, who received their countryman with much cordiality and in princely style but could do nothing for him in politics. The imperial beauty-fancier, when pressed for his ultimatum, said laughing, that he hoped the Honourable Company would continue their friendly intercourse with Bengal, by importing plenty of Bourdeaux, and cargoes of live stock like the envoy present to him, which was a bronze figure of the Venus of Medicis.

Bethel, soon after his arrival, had to set out on a fatiguing journey to Dowlatabad, where he got ready access to the *Facqueer*, as Prince Aurungzeb was usually called by the profane. He would not enter on negotiation. Every proposal to him was interrupted by disclamation of any aspiration to power, and pious ejaculations for peace to the empire. Though the servants of his highness were superbly dressed, and formidable guards surrounded his person, he wore a frock and turban such as might become a husbandman. He had the cap distinguishing religious mendicants on his head, and a string of beads, which he kept handling, descended to his girdle. A beard of unusual dimensions made the youthful satrap look venerable ; and a habit of dropping the under-jaw, quite altering the natural expression of his countenance, gave it an air of rueful longitude. Addressing his visitor at a second interview, he said, " I dismiss thee, O priest of the Christians, who worship three gods, and deny the last and greatest of the prophets. The emperor cannot cherish men who are impious. For me, my home is in the holy

land of Mecca. But if the king of kings, Shah Jehan, retire from sway to enjoy the repose of age, Prince Morad, lieutenant of the lord of inherited empire, will protect the unbelieving traders of Surat if they will send him a thousand moulded shot and twenty men cunning at pointing cannon. Enough!" This final audience to a suitor for kingdoms, in presence of a crowd of messengers from neighbouring courts, was by no means complimentary to the English power in India. One of the conspicuous habits of Aurungzeb which struck Bethel as neither princely nor austere, was that of eagerly taking the greatest and smallest presents without making any return, except with the view of shewing marked approbation or satisfaction. The poor labourer denied a day's hire, and petitioning for redress, and the rich landholder, complaining of the transfer of a village from his jurisdiction, had each to make an offering, according to his means, in soliciting justice from the Lord of the Deccan. He never neglected an expedient or occasion which could add to his treasure.

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JAMES.—That Master Guttlethorpe is a droll body, for a great man; but what call you the lass? If her mother be a princess, I'll warrant she should be called one also.

BROWNIE.—No, James, I don't mean to shew so much courtesy, until she get her principality. Small critics may tell you that unmarried girls were called Mistress, not Miss, in the seventeenth century: it is true, but I prefer the translation of titles, as well as quotations and speeches, into modern language.

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## CHAPTER VII.

THE plains of Surat now flamed in all the pomp of glorious and impending war. Preparatory drilling being completed, Major Dressup exercised his army, horse, foot,

and artillery, in brigades. Delighted was the gallant officer to behold all his regulars clothed, shaven, combed, and washed, exactly as ordered, deploying at the sound of voice into all shapes and positions that could possibly be requisite to annihilate enemies according to rule. He seen to himself, and to admiring spectators, to fill a throne the saddle of his charger when the subordinate chiefs thousands and of hundreds advanced in front of the line and dropped their swords in homage to him—the monarch of all. Much intrigue, disappointment, and some exultation had attended the issuing of commissions. The majority of candidates belonged to the class called Interlopers, or venturers, who had gone out independent of the Company. Others, designated Shippies, were gentlemen of the sea, who aspired to laurels on land. Both interlopers and shippies deeming competition vain with the party who frequented the Gardens, tacitly allowing them precedence, reserved squabbling and heartburning for the rivalry that arose among themselves. Dalbracken, whose commission gave him superior rank to any which Mr Guttlethorpe could confer, did not interfere in a manner which gained him credit from the parties. Lieutenant Williams, of the old and distinguished Surat Battalion, who, besides other conspicuous services, commanded his company in a very gallant manner during the famous repulse of the Maharattas, was from the above circumstance about to be placed under a young man whom he assisted in teaching military duty. Dalbracken therefore proposed and intreated that the Chief and Colonel Baskin should, before appointing others to inferior grades, nominate Dressup lieutenant-colonel, and Williams major of the Force. As this arrangement could be objected to by no one but himself, it was readily adopted.

It appeared more extraordinary to find men of peaceful and contemplative professions becoming soldiers on this occasion. But in fact both Bethel and Cambridge were already disgusted with the dull and almost useless life which they had to expect in a factory; so unlike the career of activity and splendour anticipated by them before leaving

England. The duties of a clergyman consisted in baptizing natural children, and in marrying a couple once in two or three years. The medical practitioner could not rise in his profession, nor make a fortune without virtually renouncing it and turning trader. Mr Guttlethorpe, glad to find respectable persons willing to serve, did not hesitate to assign these two rank next to Dalbracken. Steelbow, notwithstanding strong claims, would not have been raised above the post of a subaltern, had Malcolm not vouched for his intrepid gallantry, and the brief elevation by which it was rewarded on the field of battle. The Chief's secret bias in favour of royalty concurred to raise the appreciator of good dinners to the dignity of Captain, despite of remonstrances. De Sylva and De Jungle also became centurions.

It may appear odd that the company, in proposing to contend for kingdoms, were too modest to style the commander of their army a General. This peculiarity adhered to them long afterwards. Parade is the cradle in which infant war is rocked, till he issues forth the formidable giant, whose club settles the disputes of nations. But, a plain honest historian, I must yet withhold my eyes a little from the epic radiance of his course, to note inferior things, which, trifling in themselves, by moving his movers, still influence the mightiest events.

Dalbracken's habit of platonic flirting with pretty women, was not to be cured by all that he had suffered. The discovery of Adeline's imposture certainly diminished his adoration of the sex, and made him more callous to their influence. But the erotic dram drinker, who has once freely indulged in excitement of his tender passions, is just as incorrigible as the toper of gin. Now the Chief's daughter, meaning as little matrimonially, and not feeling at all, was fully a match for him in the eagerness and universality of her attentions. Eurasia's bright eyes beamed on every face; her sweet voice, with its winning discords, thrilled in every ear, not without effect: for wherever vanity of himself, or admiration of her existed in man, she inflicted a wound and left hopes of her healing it. Ambition, however, as well as love, might contribute to swell the list of her admirers.

The Sahibzadee's mother was a once beloved sister of the Maha Rana, Jeswunt Sing, of Chittore, chief of the Descendants of the Sun, and lineal representative of the heroic and deified Rama Chundra, who reigned eleven thousand years over Aoyda, consequently the head of the Rajapoots, and the first man of Hindoo blood. Without counting intermediate generations, I flatter myself that I have secured for Eurasia the respect of Aristocrats, and, what is more important, the forbearance of their plebeian advocates, who will doubtless reckon royalty, like nobility, from the date of its creation. Her high-born parent was given in marriage to the Raja of Taraghur, in Malwa: an old man who, amidst the public convulsions attending Shah Jehan's succession, managed to get possession of the small principality of Surajpore. This territory, yielding about two laks, or twenty thousand pounds of yearly revenue, being the ancient property of the house of Chittore, was still claimed by Jeswunt Sing. But on this alliance taking place, the parties came to an amicable adjustment, by executing a formal deed, conveying the disputed lands in perpetuity to the princess and her offspring. His Highness of Taraghur, no doubt, meant the children which he expected to have by the Maha Rana's sister. Before any such event, however, when the lady was only fifteen, her husband becoming seriously ill, repaired to a holy place on the Narbudda, near Baroach, where he died. His interested successor, being on the spot, made his Bramins persuade the young widow to burn herself with the corpse of the deceased. A party of English writers, belonging to the Factory there, having ridden out to witness this act of self-immolation, were allowed to approach close to the heap of wood and combustibles prepared for the purpose, on which the Suttee, as the victim is called was standing in full view, after having been duly consecrated by the priests. It is usual for the woman, just before lighting the fire which is to consume her, to distribute pieces of sandal, seeds of sacred plants, and other little things, as relics to the spectators.

Guttlethorpe being foremost of the Europeans, pitied the beautiful girl trembling like an aspen, and evidently com-

pelled to commit horrible suicide, but never having any romance in his nature, the possibility of her rescue did not once occur to him, until he had effected it. Ignorant of the ceremony, and mistaking her movement to present something for an invitation to bid farewell, he took hold of her hand to shake it, and thereby desecrated the Suttée, before the yells of an hundred Bramins could arrest the irrevocable act. She sprung from the pile, clasping his knees, and implored him to save her life. By the interference of the Mussulman guards, in attendance as usual, he was enabled to carry off the charming suppliant, and they were afterwards united according to the Hindoo form. The Ranee thus saved, was infamous in her own tribe, and utterly disowned by her kindred. Still, hoping to revive the Maha Rana's brotherly affection, and never losing sight of Surajpore, she strove many years in vain to open a communication with her proud relatives. But now that he, who was considered her husband, appeared as the chief of a people, fitting out an army which might help to change the sovereignty of India, the Ranee began to entertain sanguine expectations that ensuing events would restore Surajpore to her and her child.

Eurasia, therefore, besides personal attractions of the first order, offered the prospect of a principality to her husband, who, if an able soldier or politician, might make it the germ of a kingdom. Such hopes were by no means fantastical at that place and time, which indeed realized wilder visions.

This heiress of so much hope was treated already with somewhat of the distant respect of vassals to a princess by all the pretenders, until the arrival of Bahadur Ally's three pupils, who first dared to approach her on terms of equality. The girl, feeling really no partiality for any one, her mother openly declared her wish to bestow the prize on him whose sword could best second her pretensions to the principality. Pure and unalloyed love, I fear, is seldom found in the breasts of those who have learnt much of the ways of women. But in men of a certain temperament, it unites well with



ambition, and, in truth, loses nothing of rationality by the union. Had Dalbracken been mentally disengaged at this time, he could not have felt indifferent to the Sahibzadee. But his imagination was now building a more magnificent castle in the air, and depicting to his heart a loftier and a lovelier object to receive its endearments, than what his eyes beheld. This day-dream, which actuates so much of his future procedure, will duly transpire. It did not, however, prevent him from continuing to play the game of pleasing and being pleased with Eurasia, who indulged him liberally, and appeared in no earthly danger of ever feeling seriously. Her friend, Lady Ludgate, not an unpleasant or ill-looking woman on the whole, had a design very common to the sex, which she strove to execute by little artifices that unfortunately always discovered themselves.

Her ladyship had already gone the round of the Factory, knocking at the door of every heart which she thought worthy of receiving her; and was accustomed to make use of the Sahibzadee's freedom of remark, to decoy shy bachelors into her snares. As they sat alone one day, Eurasia asked her to turn over the leaves of a music book as she played. "Oh! my dear," cried the knight's widow, "how can I, since that vile kitten scratched my hand? 'Tis so painful, you can't conceive! I have a good mind to get Dalbracken to take it off—*Dalbracken*, my goodness! The doctor, of course; 'tis Dr Cambridge I mean." The ambiguity of the phrase, and the proverb of "next the heart first at the mouth," made Eurasia think the story too good to be lost, and she threatened to tell it. Jiger, however, joining them at the time with his violin, their attention was turned for a while to other amusement. Dalbracken, idle in his own apartment, hearing the jocund sounds of the piano and fiddle in concert, went straight to the room. Mr Jiger sat fixing his eyes on the floor, making faces, and moving his elbow at double quick time. Passing him, unperceived, Dalbracken went close to the back of the chair on which the young lady was seated. Her fancy being still tickled with the disposal of Lady Ludgate's hand,

she looked up, and most unexpectedly saw the very man who was to "take it off." Eurasia, instantly ceasing to play, starting to her feet, and crossing her arms as she fronted Dalbracken, giggled so loudly, yet with such natural exhilaration, that sympathetic cachinnations responded from the remotest chambers of the house. The astonished youth conceived the ladies to have made some poignant jest at his expense: and no longer trembling as when Clara was to be attacked, while the laughing beauty, convulsed and blind, still stood opposite, he stopped her voice with an unresisted kiss.—"Now," said he, "let those laugh who win!" The novelty of this "sweet revenge," to her, seemed actually to turn the fair comet from its course. Without saying a word, she turned round, moved slowly into the veranda, and thence bounded like a wild fawn to her mother's habitation.

This event created a great sensation at Surat. Of seven Shippies, three Interlopers, and two of the set at the Gardens, who sought favour in the eyes of the Sahibzadee, not one ever contemplated the audacity of touching her lips, until he had covered himself with glory in fields to come. It is marvellous what strange occurrences will conjure up hope to presumptuous love. Mr John, or Jack of the Jungle himself, not being thoroughly reconciled to all the customs of Europeans since he began to live regularly amongst them, used, when at dinner, to hold a gaol delivery of his feet from durance in tight shoes, which the playful Eurasia made her servant steal: and afterwards summoning the unconscious owner suddenly to the drawing-room, she and the other ladies made fine sport of the poor fellow's awkward apologies for appearing unshod. Mr John thought such tricks, which he traced to their source, sure signs of affection "for one of her own caste, and a learned man just going to be an officer in the army."

Steelbow, proud of his valour, past and future, considered his early association with a king as investing him with dignity enough to cast his late humble condition into oblivion. The vain rogue actually believed the young lady fond of him, and his flame was fed in her characteristic manner.

She took a malicious pleasure, after warning her confidants to observe him, in making the untutored soldier gormandize whatever she offered, until he was obliged slyly to unbutton his waistcoat and the band of his inexpressibles. He thought his fortune made at last, when she presented him with an old beaver hat of her own, the sides of which were fastened down by a ribband under the chin, to preserve his complexion from the sun. This preservative of comeliness was given on condition that he should get her a leopard's skin in one of his hunting excursions, for a covering to her pony's saddle. "I'll do so, Ma'am, if I had to jump down the beast's throat for a skin, and will make a party immediately to look for one and shoot it." The gallant Captain was as good as his word. And, to undeceive your untravelled countrymen who think sojourners in India a luxurious and inactive race, I will just describe the diversions of that very day in which this promise of the leopard's skin was fulfilled.

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**JAMES.**—You will not be insisting on putting that heathen prince's generation or pedigree in print, seeing it is full of lies: how can man be older than the world itself?

**BROWNIE.**—Leave belief to the consciences of your readers, James. I state a fact in which millions of people believe; and I suspect you will find few statements equally fortunate in European genealogies. Rama's age is attested by the Hindoo scriptures.

I have to observe respecting Eurasia's uncle, whom historians generally style "The Maharaja," that his proper designation is Maharana: both words meaning Great Prince as Europeans say "Grand Duke." Vulgar authorities also make Jeswunt a Rhatòr, not a Sesoyda; but I need no advise you to trust to me.

## CHAPTER VIII.

SOME country people employed for the purpose, having discovered the dens of two tigers some way apart in a neighbouring forest, came with the intelligence, and conducted the party to the spot. Cambridge and Bethel mounted on one elephant, Steelbow and Dalbracken on another, each armed with a rifle in his hand and a brace of pistols in his belt, were followed by men leading their horses and others carrying boar spears.

When they approached the scene of action, one of the peasants running before, as if treading thorns, looked into a thicket, and immediately returned in the same cautious manner to report the tiger in his lair. The horsemen being ordered to fall back, the elephants, moving asunder to right and left, advanced upon the slumbering game. Presently a crash was heard among the brushwood—the bushes began to shake, marking his progress, and now the long, writhing back of the animal appeared, as he cowered, attempting to remain concealed while stealing away. On reaching a spot without cover, he gave a threatening growl at the hunters on both sides, and proceeded to flee from them at full bound. The whizzing of two balls close to his head made him turn, exposing the whole of his spacious flank to Cambridge and Bethel, who, firing in succession, inflicted mortal wounds. In the rage and agony of dying, the fierce, but not combative creature, was found to have crushed the bones of one of his fore-legs with his own teeth. There being little certainty respecting the habitations of leopards, which seldom frequent the same place long, Steelbow trusted to the chance of beating up one in a tract of jungle that they now entered. On arriving at a group of tall and leafy trees, such as the owners of the spotted skin, so eagerly sought by the sighing huntsman, often climb to take shelter in when driven from their dells by the tramp and shrill voice of the elephants, the wearer of the beaver called on the rest to dismount and assist him in the capture. Each took his station. Steelbow cocking his gun and gazing up among the boughs as he stalked about, perceived the face of the desiderated prey peering from the foliage right overhead. The rifle was pointed, and it roared in an instant. Equally soon descended the uninjured leopard, and sallying against Cambridge's part of the besieging circle, scratched his thigh and carried off the half of his nether habiliments in making its escape. One of the three balls which pursued it broke a hind leg. The lover and the sportsman now inflaming one breast, Steelbow, springing into the saddle, grasped his spear, and pricking over an open space resorted to unwittingly, overtook and transfixed the leopard before it could take refuge in the jungle.

The operation which followed, of stitching the rec portion of Cambridge's breeches to the rest, and sundry able jokes on the ardour which the lady's favour had ir in the possessor of the beaver, to accomplish her wishes up the spirits of the party, as they continued their sport much fatigue and a burning sun. "You have won her, bow! No doubt of it now; but tell me what she is g after all? Why, her beauties are things to look at, but touching them, you might as soon try to lay hands on the lilies in the quagmire yonder, and sink over head and ears: the mud, though it carries them well enough."—"No Steelbow, there is neither mud nor mire about Eurasia, b is a pretty rainbow, catch her if you can."—"Don't mind Steelbow. The Sahibzadee, like her grandfather the sun, is times in clouds and mist, and changes from one colour to a but still keeps her place and shines after all."—"I don't as one may say, what you mean gentlemen, but I don't ca knows it, I think Miss Guttlethorpe's a d—d nice girl," s slayer of the leopard, whose sentiment happened to be th one in which all the speakers concurred. After a long when patience had almost failed, they came at last to tl marked by the people. It was empty. Every one looked wiped his brow, yawned, or grumbled. Separating, ho and making a circuit about the place, Steelbow, in his m phraseology, sounded a halt. He swore positively to h the cry of either a leopard or a wild-cat, and alighted in of a second saddle-covering. Disappearing for nearly a q of an hour, the rest had become really anxious concerni fate in such a place, when to their horror he emerged fro jungle of grass and thorns, carrying a tiger's cub by the s its neck. "Put down the elephant! run! mount for sake! The old ones are never both an hundred paces from young." Disregarding these eager injunctions, Steelbow s leisurely up the ladder, calling on them to admire his priz could scarcely be a week old, though its innate ferocity a required restraint. On passing through the thicket and c to a piece of smooth ground surrounding a pool of water discovered another cub crawling about and screaming l! Getting its sentence pronounced by a drum head court-m Steelbow executed it with his pistols. The report ins neously brought the mother rushing at them, bounding an ing with the tail flourished over her back. The volle charged on the assailant not proving deadly, aggravate fury, as she sprung behind the Howda or Castle in Dalbracken and his companion sate, fixing her teeth in tl and her claws in the elephant's hams. He groaned dread and began an attempt to shake off his torturing burden, imminent peril of the two sportsmen. Their heads no scribed and retraced the arc of a circle not less than fo

feet in radius, with alarming velocity. The Scotsman's inexperience allowed his gun to be slung into the air. Holding on with one hand, and groping with the other for his pistols, he fired both successively at the tigress's head, which the balls struck to his astonishment ineffectually. "You should send them through her eyes, my good sir," observed Steelbow; "if it were not for this cursed shaking of the big beast, I would soon settle her hash." At last, when their joint exertions succeeded in loading the gun, the sagacious soldier, applying its muzzle to the ribs of his enemy, shot her through both lungs. The tigress rolled lifeless to the ground amidst shouts of victory, gladdening in proportion to the danger escaped.—"What a fuss your home-bred squires make about running down hares, or a poor devil of a fox! It is but hunting fleas on a feather-bed, as one may say, compared to this." Captain Steelbow saying so, and more also, twice the hero of the field, was rather loquacious and boastful, until sobered by a subsequent event. The heads of the elephants turned homewards, they soon bore their loads out of the haunts of the tiger and leopard. A crowd of cultivators next met the hunters, entreating them to attack some wild hogs that were devouring a field of sugar cane. Three of the party mounting horses, got ready for the sport. Dalbracken, proposing to take his first lesson by looking on, retained his seat in the castle. He was thus enabled to discover one of the pigs before his comrades, and he shot it, little anticipating their denunciation of the act as unsportsmanlike. The sow first dashed out at a rapid pace, grunting furiously. Coming within Cambridge's limits, he overtook her at full gallop. Getting side by side without in the least exerting his strength, he dropped the spear from his hand, and turned off at an angle, lest missing his aim, he should expose his horse to the hog's tusks. She was pierced through, however, and nailed to the ground.

As the Doctor gained much applause by this feat, Steelbow, alive to his reputation, was all on fire to out rival him. Riding amongst the canes, he started the father of the farrow, a huge animal, foaming and gnashing his jaws as he presented himself on the plain, a noble object of assault. Steelbow exulting in his pride of place, which was the saddle, in order to exhibit his dexterity and superior horsemanship to the greatest advantage, prepared to *job*, and that being interpreted, means to stab, without discharging the spear. Running nearly parallel at full speed, by adroit management approaching sufficiently near, and bending proudly forward, he lanced his right hand with equestrian magnificence. But the wary boar, swerving towards the aggressor, received the weapon in the skin of his further shoulder instead of the heart. Infuriated by the graze, the animal pushed at the horse and ripped up his belly, hurling both him and his rider to the ground. Steelbow, getting timely extricated from all entanglements, threw himself off, and lay at

some distance, but just on the way by which the boar proposed to march off. Unfolding anew his serrated jaws, the raging beast rushed at the glancing eyes of his prostrate adversary. The discomfited horseman had still sufficient presence of mind, lying on his stomach to depress his head, the nearest part of him, and to elevate its covering, so that Eurasia's beaver was most fortunately the only thing injured. But treading him under foot, the monster bore away the cherished present on his lacerating tusks, nor resigned it until Bethel came up and transfixed him.

In answer to many eager enquiries, Steelbow rose up safe and sound. To avert the raillery which he fully expected, he congratulated Dalbracken on having seen more sport in partaking of it for the first time, than he might see for years to come. "Ere another year elapse," replied the youth, "I hope we shall all encounter nobler game than pigs."—"Hurra! hurra! so say I," roared the overthrown hog-hunter, glad to divert conversation from a sore subject. "Hurra for nobler game! and now let us end the day by a steeple race—first at the flagstaff!" Away they flew all four through brakes, over ditches, now splashing in mud, now enveloped in dust, till they entered the Chief's premises, led by the Hippocentaur Steelbow. It was curious to observe how soon he now tumbled out of his element.

Observing the ladies just returning from an evening drive, "let us all," said Cambridge, "talk some nonsense about our sport to the Sahibzadee, and I will bet a gold mohur that we get the worst of it." They rode up to the open carriage, and in reply to her question, whether they had got a leopard, Bethel began the concerted attack. "Your champion here has caught a beautiful creature, every way worthy of being your lap dog."—"No, Ma'am, no such thing; it is only just what one may call a tiger puppy," cried Steelbow eagerly in explanation. "Well said, Mr Steelbow, rejoined she; "you call Mr Bethel by his right name, a tiger puppy! You see he recommends himself to me, and a pretty lap dog it is!" Unfurling her white handkerchief at his ear, she dismissed Bethel with a good natured laugh, which blunted the sharpness of the words. "Stand aside, friend," said the Doctor, "it is my turn. Miss Eurasia," began he in a whining tone, "your favour, alas, has been ill bestowed on that cavalier, bold as he is; it should be as pearls in his eyes, but I myself saw your beaver actually thrown before swine."—"You must wash your face before we believe you," answered the lady, directing one of her laughter-peals at a spot of mud which had radiated from a black centre over all his cheek. "Lady Ludgate," continued she, "thinks you put on that mask for fear the boar should take you for Adonis."—"Eurasia? la, my dear!" and other negative interjections from her ladyship, were interrupted by the serious face and loud denials of Steelbow, who thought the banter contained enough of truth to blast his tender hopes. "Don't believe him, I pray you, Miss Guttlethorpe, it

was an accident, and I shall explain it completely. It is all a humbug, too, his caring a quid of tobacco for the beaver. He told me going out that it was not near so good as" —— the Captain paused, conjecturing that petticoat, like breeches, might be a proscribed word. "As what? Mr Steelbow, tell me what he said, don't be afraid of him." Thus urged, he went on. "Afraid Ma'am? not I, for upon my soul he bade me ask you for a Lady's *small clothes*, instead of it, to preserve my complexion."—"Never mind them, Mr Steelbow," said she, "but what has happened? I see the beaver is really torn. Are you hurt?" A full and true account of what had occurred being given to the ladies, the hunters set off to wash themselves preparatory to the serious business of dinner.

Turning from these frivolous doings and puerilities, until the Chinese gong shall resound the hour of festivity through the halls of the Chief, I will state briefly what was then passing between the two principal characters at Surat. Mr Guttlethorpe, closeting himself with Mr Jiger in secret conference, proceeded to consider the ways and means of obeying an order from England, in the most approved manner. The Honourable the Court of Directors, or Committees, commanded him to appoint a "civil servant of high rank" to accompany the English army, as commissioner, in the ensuing war. The duties of the office were to consist in securing by treaties, on good parchment, all territories and realms whatsoever, conquered in the name of the Company, or ceded to the same; to prevent the victorious troops from helping themselves too liberally to booty, and to impress them with the propriety of legalizing all plunder by giving it twenty years repose in the public treasury.

Mr Guttlethorpe, being a practical statesman, saw the subject in a two-fold light. First, an empire might be won: in which case he, as the highest local functionary, ought to partake largely in the triumph. But, secondly, there was some likelihood of the Company's losing an army and much money—a contingency for which it were hard that he should suffer, knowing himself totally incapable of influencing the good or ill fortune of a distant expedition. Sound policy, therefore, dictated the conversion of this commissioner into an unassuming deputy, who should arrogate nothing, in success, and be always on the spot to intercept any imputable misconduct from his superior. Yet the Chief, though somewhat bewildered by ambition, in thus unsphering himself from his ancient circle of Factory duties, was by no means a bad or a heartless man. Hope being greatly predominant in his mind at present, he expected enough of glory for all concerned; and was well pleased to think that his most intimate friend, Mr Jiger, possessed almost every quality requisite in a High Commissioner.

"The devil is, Jiger, all the world knows you to be an idler of twenty years' standing, and a Company's bad bargain.



Whenever your name is mentioned, they say, 'ha! the strange fellow who rides on a camel;' or perhaps, 'he that the monkeys robbed of his fiddle, when he was playing to them in the tope at Paudolly.'—"True, Guttlethorpe," replied the other, "that was the best violin I ever got out (from England); do you recollect how well you liked this tune on it?"—"Now, Jiger, it is really too bad to whistle when I am so serious! Will you never look like your rank? By the Lord, unless you lift up your head a little, or do something in the first instance, I don't know what the deuce to give as a reason for conferring this appointment on you."—"I have travelled seventy miles a day for a week to serve the Company, and on a pinch, can ride a hundred, which is more than Blarneyfib, Snoremuch, Hoaxem, CIPHEREM, or Jack Cramwell himself ever did."—"No doubt, Patrick, you can drive a camel farther than the best of them, play a jig or walk a minuet; but, my good fellow, such accomplishments won't do to mention in recommending a statesman. Those you name attend to business, and write long letters to boot, which are both quite out of your way."—"Well," answered Jiger, retaining all his composure, "I go or stay, just as you like; it is all one to me."—"Go you shall, Patrick, that is resolved on, as it will be a good thing for you. Why, man, the duty is and ought to be nothing; but the name is a great deal. If they refer anything to you, just say that military men are the best judges, and you will not interfere in military affairs. Such forbearance seemingly, from delicacy to them, will make you popular; but as to getting money out of the clutches of those hungry rogues, God help the Court of Committees! they might as well send you or me to dive for pearls at Ceylon. All I want in this stage of the business, Jiger, is a plausible story to write home, an ostensible reason for selecting you to represent the Government and the civil service on this great occasion. Now, I will tell you what is to be done. If European kings create their knights of merit by a word, so can I who am an Eastern ruler. You go as our ambassador to king Sawney, and just ask this plain question:—Will your Majesty give Guzerat to the Company for our assistance during the war? If he say Yes, claim immediate possession; and if he say No, why neither you nor I can help it. So, in either case, come back as fast as possible. Leave me, then, to discover the conspicuous talent, diplomatic tact, and unwearied zeal for the interest of your employers, which, when spread out on paper, shall render you pre-eminently deserving of the situation of High Commissioner to the army of Guzerat."

Presents consisting of various articles, principally those for sale at the Factory, were forthwith prepared. The ambassador sending off his equipage and retinue, allowed them to approach *Ahmedabad*, when he mounted his ship of the *Desart*, to follow

and enter the capital of Guzerat at the head of the embassy. It is believed that both in passing and repassing he avoided the fatal grove, whose inhabitants, so unlike the audience of Orpheus, had imitated the murder of the goose that laid the golden egg, in tearing the instrument of sweet sounds from the hands that awakened them.

Now, besides the war to be at a distance, I am bound to notice another which had raged the same forenoon within the fairy mansion of the Ranee. The import and significance of a kiss among Europeans being unknown to the Hindoo princess, she, to be fully informed before discussing the matter with her husband, summoned his female guests with several assessors from the Factory, to sit in judgment on the conduct of Dalbracken to Eurasia. The bench was divided; some of the fair judges called the salute a frolic; others an improper freedom; the majority considered it an indication of love; but those who had lived longest in the East, and were consequently reckoned wisest, declared it equivalent to a proposal of marriage. The Ranee, holding the last opinion to be decidedly the most rational, observed, that with people of decorum, matrimony would have preceded a kiss. This lady, now prepared to argue with the Chief on his own ground, whereof she thought he was wont to take unfair advantage, summoned him to ascertain the eligibility of this irregular suitor for their daughter. Guttlethorpe, naturalized in eastern settlements where gentlewomen were scarce, precious, and revered, opened his eyes and mouth very wide on hearing of what had passed. Remaining silent for a minute, he started up with an air of offended dignity, saying, "It is an insult to the family! I am determined to deliver over charge of the Factory to Jiger, and call out Mr or *Captain* Dalbracken this very evening. Yes! I am master here, and nobody shall prevent me!" All the ladies knowing him to be sternly in earnest, rose up with deprecating exclamations, imploring the chief to be reasonable, and protesting their belief that the young man had honourable intentions. "You have been in love yourself, Mr Guttlethorpe, and ought to pardon a slight impropriety in another blinded by his feelings."—"Is he a good match for Eurasia?" demanded the more business-like mother. "Oh! there might have been no objection to him on that score," replied he, "but the gentleman ought first to have got permission to court my daughter, and been accepted too by me, and then by her, before he presumed to kiss her." When Guttlethorpe began to reason, Mrs Batta, drawing close to his ear, spoke aside as to the natural consequence of the young lady's extreme frankness of speech and behaviour, on which her father himself had remarked, and pointed out the provocation which her levity had given Dalbracken to exact a forfeit. Walking backwards and forwards for some time in deliberation, the Chief acknowledged to his monitress in the same confidential

tone, that she had modified his views of the case. "They are both to blame," said he, "and since matters have come to this pass, they must take one another for better or worse. I will insist on their marrying." Here was a new dilemma! The Ranee, by no means conceding his right to dispose of their daughter unconditionally, called for much exact intelligence concerning the caste, parentage, fortune, and prospects of her proposed son-in-law. The rest of the conclave deprecating hurry or compulsion in so delicate an affair; one went in quest of Dalbracken to get his consent, but never returned: another ran in search of Eurasia, and brought her, as she was found, using a skipping-rope.

After due preparation, being solemnly interrogated whether she was ready to take the culprit for her lord and master, the girl unhesitatingly answered, "No!"—"Why? why? My God, why?" resounded through the room. "I am a child in heart," replied Eurasia, "I like to be a child still; and until I tire of being one, will not become any man's wife!" With these words she jumped over her rope and left the apartment to resume her pastime. The lady who undertook to bring the actor, cast for the part of husband in this drama, without finding him, met Bethel, who soon extinguished her hopes of getting his friend to tread the matrimonial stage. She very considerably withheld this information which parties whom it would have outraged never received. Mr Guttlethorpe, abandoning the project of a marriage on account of his daughter's refusal, began to feel ashamed of his warmth about what he said turned out child's play; so begging all present to let the fooleries of the young people remain a joke, and the proceedings at the meeting a secret, he resolved to comport himself to Dalbracken as heretofore, instead of turning him neck and crop out of the house; which, besides being likely to create dissensions among public servants when harmony was imperatively demanded, might offend no less a person than the President of Committees. Yet the politician was over-ruled by the man. The arrow not only stuck but festered in his side. With the rancour of an Oriental towards one who has taken unauthorized liberties with a female relative, the Chief resolved to banish the offender from his sight; and to do so without incurring the displeasure of Sir Josiah Child, he made a change in his public measures, which had consequences of the greatest magnitude. Persuaded by the Ranee and her astrologer, that if the army, levied to decide the fate of the Mogul Empire, marched before the *Hooly*, a festival in celebration of the vernal equinox, no Hindoo soldier in it would expect success, or believe himself fighting under a propitious deity, Guttlethorpe, not without a leaning to native superstitions, intended to keep the troops at drill till then, amusing the competitors, and waiting to see *what might cast up*. Had he done this, the English force

must have joined the rebels and lost most of its Europeans in the intense heat of a Guzerat summer, as we shall afterwards see: and Malcolm Dalbracken, still impelled by the recoiling bow-string, which, as Warrieston said, the old Laird drew too far back to keep hisson out of the way of woman-kind, unless he had kissed Eurasia, would not have been driven from Surat at the proper season to earn the rare distinction that awaits him. But the incensed father of the girl determining to get rid of him, ordered the army to which he belonged to take the field on the twentieth of November.

The wavering balance of his mind having been turned in favour of the heir-apparent by the domestic incident above detailed, the reasons of state by which the man in authority professed to be guided, will presently transpire.

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## CHAPTER IX.

THE most faithful servant of Prince Morad, and the only person who dared to tell him unwelcome truth, was an old eunuch by whom he had been attended from his infancy. This privileged monitor, exacting a promise of secrecy, remonstrated with his master, in impressive terms, on the extreme imprudence of trusting Aurungzeb implicitly, on the authority of an agent, whose acts the principal might disavow whenever he found it convenient. He approved of the treaty, but earnestly enjoined the self-styled king to demand such securities and take such precautions as the importance of the case required for the fidelity of his ally. Morad, listening to the old man's opinion of the most effectual measures for binding his saintly brother to the fulfilment of his engagements, resolved to adopt them; and for that purpose he immediately requested a personal interview.

Morad, conceiving the terror of his name sufficient defence for Guzerat, now when he knew of Dara's proposed departure from Delhi, was busily preparing to march to his father's capital, instead of encountering the auxiliaries of the Vicegerent. Aurungzeb, whose cautious plots were only hatching, found himself thrown into a most embarrassing predicament by the temerity of his intended instrument. Neither being ready for the field, one a declared traitor, the other suspected of abetting his treason, the Lord of the Deccan's difficulties were augmented tenfold by the demand of a conference, which must put their alliance beyond doubt. Whilst his cunning is contriving to give rebellion the complexion of loyalty, and to avert the threatening storm, let us take a view of his mad-cap brother's internal proceedings.

To learn the ordinary habits of either a ruler or a private person,

the best way is to pop in upon him without giving warning. I will accordingly introduce the curious reader into the palace and the presence of Akbar the Second, on the very day before he set out to visit Aurungzeb. The outer court now exhibited that system of finance which his Majesty depended upon in all emergencies. Groups of soldiers under arms stood over parties of monied men in the stocks, who disaffectedly refused to pay the taxes specially required of them, for carrying on the approaching just and necessary war. One log will afford a specimen of all; it had accommodation for six prisoners, and was quite full; four of them, tied together with a cord, kept looking about, claiming pity of the spectators and shivering like children going to be ducked in cold water. The officer on duty coming up, followed by a number of men, each carrying the lacerating whip called *Corah*, read in a paper—"From the four grain dealers one lack of rupees." The poor creatures, on hearing those words, distorted their features hideously at the same instant, and roared and wept at the stretch of their lungs. "Strip the knaves, strip them to the skin!" was the next mandate. They implored mercy as being already beggars, having given up every farthing, as they were ready to attest by any number of the most solemn oaths. "Silence, your mother's naughtiness!" vociferated the Captain. "Shew us your hoards! Must soldiers want pay whilst merchants are wallowing in wealth? No, no, things are not come to that pass yet—flog away!"—"Ah! ah! ah! ah! renowned Lord! Protector of the poor! Stop one moment; do not disgrace our children by whipping us to death; we have nothing in this world left."—"No trifling, big bellied liars," rejoined the official, "once more, will you pay the king his due?"—"The king is God, his majesty may take our lives, we have nothing else."—"Lay on!" The executioners obeyed, and the victims shrieked, calling on "the justice of Shah Jehan! the justice of Sultan Dara!" until they had received each ten stripes. "Stay! stay! illustrious sir! we will pay fifty thousand rupees," said one of them.—"Why do you stop, rascals, cut deeper, and go on!" reiterated the commander. "Hoi! hoi!" screamed all in concert, "I am dead! I am dead!—sixty thousand!—eighty thousand!—ah! stop and take all." The next in order had no co-partners, and seemed a very composed sort of gentleman under such circumstances. "I have been seized on the false information of an enemy," said he; "my friends there are come to vouch that I possess nothing but my books and wits to live by."—"Sew Das Byad?"—"The same." "Yes, doctor, you are down for five thousand rupees, and I will trouble you for the amount."—"Where could I get such a sum?"—"Alas!" replied the other, "my patients give no fees." It appeared on enquiry, that the doctor was physician to an hospital for monkeys, in Ahmedabad; and through the interest of some persons in attendance he got off. One, still remaining, proved a very different character from the rest; he looked indeed more like the torturing tyrant than the suffering slave. "Is this usage for a

Syud," demanded he, "to be put in the stocks with low-born Pagans?" The captain, in a subdued tone, pleaded the want of a vacancy in better company, and his duty to execute orders. "What infidel authorizes you to plunder me?" The Purwannah, an official order bearing Akbar the Second's seal, was handed to him. The furious prisoner spat upon the paper and tore it to pieces. "I acknowledge no emperor but Shah Jehan; my wealth is my own; I will keep it; let him who dare strike me, knowing my origin from the Prophet's loins!" This fierce defiance of lawful authority, not less than his horror of scourging a Syud, or descendant of Mahommed, induced the officer to apply for fresh instructions, and he accordingly repaired to the presence.

In a spacious hall, within the inner court, sat Akbar the Second, at once transacting business and attending to his ordinary amusements. A cotton quilt, about an inch thick, lay immediately over the terraced floor, and was itself covered with strong red silk drawn tight, and nailed down at the sides and ends. Various parallelograms of brocade and velvet were placed around, on one of which, with a large pillow supporting his back, and two small cushions under his thighs, appeared the handsomest of a peculiarly handsome family. Morad wore an imperial turban, which is the only crown used in the East; plain white muslin formed the receptacle of his head, which was encircled by five rolls of the finest cloth of gold, twisted like a rope; it had also strings of pearls and precious stones laterally. Right in front, from a star of diamonds, a costly aigrette issued, bearing the symbol of regal dignity. The common dress of the Prince, as of his brothers, was after the Mogul fashion; at this time he had on a frock of purple satin, fringed with gold lace and embroidered at the breast, on the left side of which it opened, displaying a white tunic that closed round his neck. A belt, resembling the turban in texture and quality, girt his loins. Wide trousers of the stuff commonly called *King Caub*, and *Joorauks* or short stockings of shawl cloth, completed his personal equipment. The whole bespoke negligent splendour, hanging upon a person which no carelessness could render elegant.

It would not be difficult to give specimens of the entertainment delighted in by the youthful viceroy and his companions in arms and revelry; I shall forbear, however, doubting whether the representation might seem perfectly moral to scrupulous Christians.

Several bands or sets of dancing and singing girls were now exhibiting before him in succession. No expense had been spared in collecting these ladies, the most skilful and beautiful of their kind, from Cashmere and more distant countries. When tired of their ordinary performances, with or without the splendid attire, he was wont to play a sort of *High Jinks*, personating Crishna, the Hindoo Apollo, frolicking among his gopies or milkmaids. Like the gay and purple deity of *Matra's holy plain*, his favourite pastime, in bestowing the guerdons to those who pleased him best, was

to exact conditions suggested by a wanton imagination to promote licentious mirth. His worst exhibitions, however, were moral and decent to those which delighted Pope Alexander the Sixth and his accomplished daughter.

Amidst uproar and laughter, our acquaintance the Captain arrived to report the contumacy of the Syud, whom he, as a true believer, did not know how to deal with. Akbar the Second, starting to his feet, called out in a terrible voice,—“Does he live who spat on our order, and said we were no Emperor? Begone caitiff! thou art trembling,—is there no loyal infidel here, who can punish a rebel?”—“Command me!” said a brutal looking Hindoo, of the Goojar tribe, joining his palms and thrusting himself forward. He was employed about the Court and Camp, like Bow Street officers, to keep off characters such as himself, lately a chief of thieves, with still a business look. “Dispatch the insolent traitor!” cried the sovereign boy; and turning to his lord of the treasury, “Go, serve us heir to the Syud’s whole property!” said the majesty of Guzerat, and again sate down in perfect composure. As the officer retired, a tittering arose among the resting part of the dancing nymphs, their eyes being directed to a door, at which an odd figure was entering, who stood between two huge chests that the porters had just put down. Wearing a fine Mahomedan dress, with a lank whiskered face, which the women compared to a Baboon’s, this person kept looking ruefully towards the Prince, ready to salute whenever he could catch the imperial eye. A mace-bearer, demanding his business, next desired him to come forward: but the stranger, as if fearing to lose sight of valuable property in suspicious company, made an unsuccessful effort to lug two camel trunks after him, which set all the band a giggling. “What scoundrel has brought a pedlar here?” roared Morad; “we want none of his trumpery.” The servant whispered his Majesty, “An envoy!” “He seems a curiosity; introduce him by all means,” added the Prince: and was obeyed in these words—“Jee Ghur, Christian, Envoy from Surat, pays homage to the presence.” Jee Ghur (the words meaning *Fort Victory*) ducked low, raising his hands three times from the ground to his forehead, like one baling a boat. He presented credentials, which were thrust under one of the pillows and never read. All crowded round to see his luggage opened, when now brought to the proper place. The first thing visible was a pair of pistols. “What!” said King Akbar, again in wrath, “who offers us protection by presenting fire-arms? Ha! have the Christian hucksters become the governors of Guzerat and chiefs of the times?” Poor Jiger, not comprehending the offence, gaped, stared, and stood speechless. “Turn out the unmannerly dog with all his trash!” concluded Morad. “I wish I were on my camel again,” thought Jiger. But the great and powerful Meer Khan, after enjoying his confusion, interceded effectually in favour of the derided Christian. “Your Majesty,” observed he, “may forgive the ignorance of poor foreign traders, whose only knowledge is how to buy and

ey pretend to no acquaintance with affairs of state or the  
of gentlemen." These obvious truths, assented to by all  
rtly circle, appeased their sovereign, as the envoy himself  
penitentially, protesting his most loyal and respectful in-  
s. He took an inward memorandum also, to say not a word  
he cession of Guzerat. "Well, Fort Victory, let us see  
ou have brought to the presence." Thus commanded and  
l from his fright, Jiger began, like the keeper of a sloop shop, to  
nd describe his wares. The girls eagerly watched him, ex-  
g to get some valuable rarities. "There, Hyder," said the  
to one of them, "is a present for you ; put it on her in the pro-  
y, Fort Victory !" The good natured-envoy stooped in the  
circle, to invest the limbs of the gay dancer with a pair of  
breeches. A large wig completed her metamorphosis. In  
ar manner all the ladies were put in masquerade, and the  
usician in a General's uniform, wearing boots and long spurs.  
ortment of European household utensils was now unpacked  
he chest. The bowls had many admirers, but they all com-  
l of having nothing to lift them by. At last several hands  
ded at the same moment, on an article which was in danger  
g broken in the struggle, when his Majesty's command trans-  
it to the favourite Hyder, who triumphantly bore away a  
china Jordan, rich in many landscapes, to be the depository  
sweetmeats. Morad, impatient to see the girls dance in the  
ical dresses which he had given them, ordered the other  
to be hurriedly removed. Jiger, conceiving the recent  
sent to have been excited by him, and not at him, felt by  
me much at home. "Old fellow," enquired the Prince,  
you any dancers in your country?"—"Plenty, please your  
ty, but none like your Majesty's ladies."—"True! Fort  
y, where are there girls like these?" replied the Prince,  
literality for compliment, and continued: "Doubtless you  
some sort of noise too, and call it music? Are there fiddlers  
ope also?" Fired at the implied doubt, so reproachful to  
ndom, the ambassador sent instantly for his own instrument,  
the most effectual refutation of error, began to play on it.  
rother harmonists of the band, not relishing the attention  
the novel sounds obtained, rumbled, squeaked, and jingled to  
the European melody. They being made to desist, Jiger, when  
alone, was giggled, sneered, and wondered at by the whole



His Majesty, generally abrupt as the lady's whirls, suddenly put an end to these exhibitions. "Take leave, Fort Victory; but hark, tell your head-trader to send us some white men quickly, for gunners, and all the bomb balls and the smooth shot he has got. We will pay him well when we get money. Ho Tutty (Meer Khan), did not you say the English pedlars come here for cotton and to sell cloth?"—"Yes, sire, to interchange commodities."—"Tis done! hear, Fort Victory, tell your head man to send us *all* his merchandise, along with the men and the shot, and we will give him soldiers to seize *all* the cotton in Guzerat. What more? Give the old boy a dress of honour, of five pieces, and a horse." So saying, and springing from his imperial seat with gay good humour, he gave poor Jiger a shove in the act of rising, with legs benumbed by sitting long like a tailor, which threw him sprawling on the floor, whilst the Prince, hurling the fiddle out before him, "Away! Fort Victory," said he, how often must we dismiss thee? Wilt thou have a war-horse or an ambler? Can he ride?"—"This servant," quoth Jiger, "rides a camel always." The envoy's mission and department had afforded so much diversion, that he was ordered, instead of the charger, a running camel superbly caparisoned, on which he shone proudly in after days.

"Are the advance tents gone? We move at daybreak, and leave as our lieutenant the Nabob Meer Khan: let all be commanded to obey his Excellency." Prompt compliance followed the sovereign behests. "Tutty," proceeded he, addressing the deputy, "collect the money and get ready to move our whole army towards Delhi at a moment's warning. We take only twenty thousand of the veteran cavalry and a few thousand infantry, for sentries. All the rest, including Yacoob ben Leeth's division, remain under your command." These announcements being made in public for general information, the last sentence met Jiger's ear just as he departed, and the intelligence which it conveyed seeming to him the most important which his mission had obtained, he posted joyfully back to Surat, intimating that the whole province was now in the hands of Mr Guttlethorpe's secret allies. "Take leave! take leave!" next resounding through the hall from officers of the household, the courtiers retired. "Tutty," said the Prince, "after we have dined, come to the private apartment and get drunk with us." This personage, now so high in favour at Ahmedabad, is no other than the revolted minister of Golconda, the subsequent councillor and present envoy of Aurungzeb, whom Mr Guttlethorpe, as we have said, called William Pin. From Morad, who now considered him his own servant, he received the familiar title, or nickname, of *Tutty Shah*, or King of Jokers, on account of his talent at telling diverting anecdotes. This was an appellation, however, which none but his Majesty had the privilege of using. On going to the appointed place, his new sovereign addressed him thus: "Come here Tutty, this is a glorious discovery of yours; I should have damned myself outright, drinking wine, had I not got acquainted

ou."—"I rejoice in having brought what is much better than o your Majesty's notice; allow this servant to recommend cup of it now."—"A whole cup, Tutty; why the liquor is not len! there is no harm in drinking pounds of it at a draught." ue, my liege, it is a most orthodox beverage where it is made. rinks call it *water of life*, a quality of which Akbar the Se- as overmuch already—so, less than pint draughts will do." ell, hand it. Ha! Tutty, thou are a wise and witty rogue— me thyself. How long do the Franks take to complete a me debauch?"—"Three or four hours, sir."—"Blockheads! uch good stuff by drops! another cup, Tutty, full to the brim ous! What poor creatures Franks must be; we could finish in three or four minutes, and you never saw us take more n."—"Never, sire; but who among men has equalled your y in drinking, love, or war?"—"Love or war? none but Ma- d himself, on whom be eternal peace! Another full cup, better and better; ah! there must be something divine at tom of these glass vessels. How shall we reward thee, Tutty

What wilt thou be when we ascend the peacock throne?"— w, your Majesty's slave."—"Thou shalt be vizier of Hindos- utty."—"Your majesty is supremely bountiful."—"How e expend thirty millions a year? speak out Tutty!"—"Your y's exalted wisdom must dictate all things."—"We will con- ersia, China, Arabia, and all the far countries of the Cæsars, e not?"—"Most certainly, and do what my sovereign pleases rds."—"We will plunder them all of pretty women, queens, inesses too—the water of life every drop of it—the whole of ucing girls, with sets of fiddlers complete, and—hillo! r cup; you forget us, Tutty." This humble servant was his sovereign's discourse. "What will your Majesty do ?—"Return to the Vale of Cashmeer, and riot in pleasure e faithful in Paradise! Thou shalt have kingdoms, Tutty, for nistry." Another cup set the monarch a hiccupping, sitting ily, his eyes closed apace, and to prevent him from falling, the its dancer received his head into her lap, where she watched til a comatose sleep, somewhat restoring his senses, rendered to put him to bed.

atever faults might be ascribed to Morad as a civil governor, universally recognised by his troops as an indulgent and be- commander. War being the darling pastime of the prince's he regarded his soldiers with the affection of a keen sports- r his hounds. Never having read Adam Smith, he troubled little about the sources of public prosperity; and the abstract of national wealth had no place whatever in the imperial mind. But without cogitating abstrusely on that dry sub- s knew that cultivators and traders were they who supplied ts of the nobler order of fighting men; and it naturally fol- that these, being the best judges of what they wanted, could better supplied than by helping themselves. It behoved him,

particularly at present, to keep the heroes in good humour. Could I describe the line of march towards Dowlatabad, it would be an interesting model to the friends of conquering armies. The Prince, mounted on his elephant, sat in the canopied seat called an *Amari*, preceded by banner rolls, and immediately followed by the ensigns of his assumed rank; his personal escort came after. The army, straggling over ground twenty miles in length, with an average breadth of five, advanced at leisure. Groups of the men were seen in every town and village on the route, looking out for things that might be useful to them. The very horses seemed well trained to this sort of service. One would run close to a shop door and remain steady as a rock, while his gallant rider dived into the house, sticking on by the legs, and re-appearing with both hands full. Others less nimble, removed the fragile thatched roofs to facilitate a reconnoissance of the interior, and fished up desirable objects with their spears. If the owners of more substantial buildings, thinking to protect themselves and property by a barricade, impolitely shut the door, the approved mode of teaching them manners was to fire a few balls through it, unless this feeble defence appeared to the military eye of the besieger more easily removable by cutting with his sword the wooden pegs by which it revolved in the transverse beams, perforated for the purpose, above and below. The poor class of people, anticipating these invasions, generally fled to the woods, and the rich took refuge on the house-tops, abandoning their moveables altogether. Such as chose to remain behaving civilly, received no personal injury. But the disaffected who dared to resist "the servants of the state," were frequently subjected to the pains and penalties of treason. A village was rarely burned, except when the disloyalty of its inhabitants proved universal: and the brave, being always generous, seldom took away live stock of any kind, unless when a good horse or a pretty woman happened to be discovered.

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JAMES.—Troth, Jock, I cannot entirely commend you for laughing at poor men oppressed and plundered by the mighty, and such a ne'er-do-well as that Morad too! I hope we have done with him.

BROWNIE.—I do not palliate tyranny. Ignorant spectators of such proceedings feel just like you. But one who knows how much the vices of slaves provoke the oppressor's severity, look on with mixed feelings. Your brother traders had, perhaps, four lacs belonging to the firm, though they denied it, and would have sworn fifty times that they had not a rupee. Their obstinacy in falsehood, although no justification of the tyrant, becomes ludicrous when they proceed to brave the scourge without resolution to stand a moderate whipping.

JAMES.—In such a country, how do the folks manage to make money at all?

BROWNIE.—Vineyards grow on Vesuvius. Such preparations for war, like irruptions of lava, are only occasional: if constant, the fields and marts would certainly be deserts.

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## CHAPTER X.

For the unusually long period of four months before the events just recorded, Prince Dara had been resident at Delhi with his court, enjoying the gorgeous formalities of state, and the amusements in which he delighted. The nobles, who were all military commanders, nominally of five, seven, or ten thousand horse, whatever the troops actually under them, had to present themselves daily at the morning *darbar* or levee. This attendance of warriors is by no means a voluntary display of respect, or an idle exhibition, in the East. It might more properly be called a muster of commandants by the head of the army. If they fail to appear, their pay is stopped, and unless satisfactory explanation be given, is finally cut for the time any one has absented himself without leave. Most of the civil business was transacted in the apartment called *Ghoosul Khana*, or the Bath, in the afternoon. The hall of private audience, however, was that in which the heir-apparent shone more especially in his personal character. Here all the wits and sages of India, who were ambitious of imperial favour, assembled to charm the court, and earn patronage by their conversation and compositions. Many gifted, accomplished, and good men appeared amongst them; but the great majority of courtiers, merely aping what they saw approved, had no other object in affecting to relish science and literature, than by propitiating the Vicegerent on that which seemed his weak side, to creep into place or pension. A number of ignorant and impudent pretenders to superior acquisitions, made themselves very conspicuous, and more agreeable than they were aware of. Some unemployed generals and disappointed intriguers, of uncultivated minds, supposing the efforts and suggestions of high intellect that pleased Dara, on a par with the ministrations to caprice and the impositions by which the favour of ordinary princes is gained, not satisfied with professing to admire genius, became poets, philosophers, and projectors themselves. Though every candidate for distinction was listened to with grave decorum, the exhibitions of such persons afforded the heir-apparent and his inner circle of friends infinite merriment, which found vivid expression when they were by themselves.

One day, a commander of five thousand produced a picture, apparently of half a millstone, having several slits in it, and lying with its largest diameter on a lake. This the gallant Chief said was his plan of a bridge over the river Soan. The length he explained would be three coss (or six miles) between the outer abutments, to provide against inundations; the expense being estimated at one crore of rupees (or one million pounds sterling), and the time required to construct it two years.—“You mean to give us arches, I believe,” observed Dara; “pray, what height will the crown of the centre one be above the water line?”—“Sir?” enquired the architect, with joined palms, not knowing where or what the crown and water line were. A scientific rogue, to perplex him still more, said his Highness only requested to be told what the versed line of the arc was. The genius of the courtier coming to the rescue of the baffled projector, he replied “what-ever the illustrious Vicegerent pleases!”—“Ameen ool Moolk,” said Dara, to a wit whose eyes were glistening, “I suspect you wish to compete with this nobleman; what are your plan and estimate for bridging the Soan?”—“Why, sir,” remarked Ameen, “I am of opinion that the great work might be done more cheaply, and much sooner, in Allah Deen’s manner; the *Jins*, if called by an adept, would make the proposed bridge in two hours.”—“Well,” rejoined the Prince, “economy being an object, I prefer your scheme, and appoint you to rub the lamp and superintend the labourers.” Staring at him who thus appeared to snatch fortune from his grasp, and gaping in wonder to know who this redoubted builder, Allah Deen, could be, and whence the caste of expeditious masons called *Jins* were procurable, the mystified courtier never having heard of Aladdin, his lamp, or the genii, slunk back into the crowd from the general gaze. On another occasion, a civil functionary who had long panted for military honours without obtaining the command of a troop, resolving to shew surpassing qualifications, submitted a series of drawings, which comprised sections and elevation of a stupendous rocket, warranted to sweep whole armies, hostile to the legitimate succession, from the face of India. It was to be one hundred and fifty cubits long, two feet wide in the tube, and to weigh sixty-five tons. It could travel to any distance on its mission of destruction. After ascertaining the position of the enemy, whether in Bengal, Cabul, or Guzerat, the Crown Prince might discharge it from Mount Mejnoon, and annihilate his foes without the trouble of leaving the capital. The eagerness and well-bred composure with which the proposal was received, emboldened the author to dilate on the vast importance of his discovery. The Vicegerent, asking the opinion of a group of grave-looking warriors, allowed them to give vent to smothered rage, worthy of English machine breakers.

What is to become of us, cried they, if your Highness employ *that thing*, like a monstrous alligator, which is to have a mono-

poly of slaying men? Valour and generalship, the most esteemed of human virtues, will be useless, and no longer in requisition. How are our young nobles and gentlemen, born above labour of head or hands, to earn wealth and honour, if such vile contrivances are to deprive them of enemies to encounter? Dara, acknowledging these objections unanswerable, desired that they might be obviated by making the terrible power a conveyance instead of a substitute for heroes. Without causing it to go so fast as a cannon ball, said he, the genius which devised it is no doubt capable of providing accommodation on the back of each rocket for a hundred soldiers, limiting its velocity to fifty or sixty miles in the hour. A thousand such vehicles, transporting a numerous army to any distant field of battle, would set down the men fresh for action, to gain glory like their forefathers. This decision was hailed with applause and satisfaction by all but the inventor, who cursed the objectors in his heart for upsetting his hopes, when he fully expected an order on the treasury for the completion of his great design.

The brood of dull fortune seekers who angled for patronage by rhyming, were, as might be expected, more absurd still than the mechanicians. Without capacity or acquired knowledge even to mimic poetry, they considered it a convenient means of conveying flattery, and thought the vagaries of fancy which pleased a great man must be akin to the lying and cheating with which they were familiar, and just as easily practised. Many odes beginning in lofty strain, and recited by the authors, limped sadly on unequal feet. Others, composed of pilferings, ran on swimmingly, with occasional halts at the junctions of borrowed parts, until the self-appointed bard, coming on his own resources, fell from his flight like a paper kite when the string breaks, with his nose on the ground. A specimen of what diverted the Crown Prince of Delhi and his associates shall be translated, or rather imitated, for the benefit of your court poets of the West. The same sort of vanity which induces English writers to make their mother tongue resemble a Merry Andrew's coat, by mixing it with scraps of whatever foreign language their fashionable lords and ladies patronise, leads orientals to indite a still more preposterous balderdash of Persian and Arabic in their compositions. In the following sample, Persian is represented by English and Arabic, the name of which unites the idea of learning and fashion, by Latin:—

When *fulmen gerens* Dara, the Lord of Earth,  
His *vultum decus* lifts, as first of Timur's race,  
The sun asham'd from Cælo hies amain to hide  
In *alto* his less splendid face.

This intended compliment is scarcely more above the average of absurdity and extravagance in the East, than an ordinary birth-day ode appears to the courtiers of St James's. Nobody

laughed aloud. Dara observed to those next him, that he hoped they had now a satisfactory explanation why the sun always set before he appeared in the hall. Poetry of the first order, and philosophical schemes too, had, however, a patient hearing. A set of singers who had studied the art of recitation, gave full effect to bright and lofty thoughts embodied in verse, with or without the accompaniment of music, which, when permitted, was never allowed to drown the sense in melody. The Prince himself and timid authors delivered their productions secretly to these men, and remaining unknown, listened to the comments made on their poems. Discerning critics, affecting to know by internal evidence whence every piece proceeded, were wont to make a salaam or obeisance to the supposed author when his composition had been recited. The courtly dunces, resolving to appear as wise as their neighbours, were easily led by the wags to commit ludicrous mistakes, in ascribing silly nonsense to men of genius, and the best poetry to incapable fools.

The attractions of these meetings were enhanced by the consciousness of every one present that the eyes and ears of Jehanara and her maids of honour were open within their invisible recess to all that was passing. Intellectual pastimes of this kind, however, were not the only exhibitions which pleased the Vicegerent and his associates. Nothing gave them more satisfaction than theological disputations between bigots of different creeds and sects. On one occasion a famous part was acted by a Franciscan friar in controversy with a Mullah or Moslem doctor. The friar, to shew how much heaven favoured his religion above every other, recounted the extraordinary miracles of his saint with an eloquence that seemed to command a degree of attention which no good Mussulman could sanction. The high priest of the Jumma Musjeed or Cathedral Mosque, entering the lists with the Christian unasked, first detailed the particulars of Mahommed's ascent through successive mansions of bliss above the firmament on the Ass Al Borac, and then expatiated on the numbers of his disciples who had defied fire, water, air, space, and time, by faith in the Koran. "What you say, my right reverend friend," observed Dara, "is excellent; but you do not refute the Christian."—"Why?" answered his reverence, very coolly, "the difference between us is this: the infidels' miracles are all false; ours alone are true." Every heart of the faithful within hearing exulted in this triumphant response, and would have rent the air with applause; but in the presence of a latitudinarian Vicegerent, they thought it safest to keep silent. The Franciscan retorting the charge of falsehood, and making merry at the Prophet's ass with a crop of jewels growing on its neck and ears, was replied to with additional abuse; so that the theologians expended much breath in calling names, and would have come to blows, had they not been held from the *unseemly* encounter. "The vast importance of the subject,"

said Dara, gravely, "renders it certainly worthy of a battle; but this is not a question to be solved by fighting. In my opinion nothing but a new miracle can determine which of two sets of old miracles are genuine. Both religions, we are assured, have been established by them. Now, I want to know, whether the Prophet or Saint Francis has most power to preserve a disciple in peril. Each of them, it is ascertained, has times out of number saved his followers from suffering by fire. Suppose I order a pyre of dry wood, such as Hindoo widows burn on, to be erected on the sands of the Jumna, and add, besides the usual quantity of oil, a sack of gunpowder from the magazine as a pillow; will you consent, holy fathers, to lay down your heads on it together, and apply a torch to the combustibles, trusting respectively to your creeds—to the Prophet and the Saint for safety? He who comes unscathed from the trial shall be my spiritual guide." The Friar, possibly seeing the jest, raised his hands in great fervour and called for the ordeal. The high priest, to the infinite disappointment of the admirers of Islam, slunk away to vent his wrath where it would tell with more efficacy than on the ears of a sceptical prince.

Amidst such relaxations and more important transactions of serious business, the proclamation of Morad assuming the imperial title, brought grief and alarm to his kindred at Delhi. It seemed the tocsin of those civil convulsions which all expected, yet dreaded. Dara, acting with promptitude, announced his intention of proceeding with his court to the meeting point of the three great provinces of Ajmeer, Malwa, and Guzerat, to watch the hostile movements of his brothers. Meanwhile he directed the Maharaja Jeswunt Sing, who was now chief of the warlike race of Rajpoots, to occupy Guzerat with fifty thousand men, in order to restrain, if not to crush the Pretender. Having received a favourable account of the martial pretensions of the English from an Italian Mouk, he accepted the offer of the Factor at Surat, to assist him with an auxiliary force, reserving the consideration of that functionary's request for remuneration in territory, without discouraging him to hope, while he attributed Mr Guttlethorpe's demand of an important vicereignty, to some blunder of his Persian scribe.

The English army thus engaged, got instructions to co-operate with the Maharaja, and to move on Ahmedabad, at the same time that the Governor of Malwa was to bear down on the Deccan, if Aurungzeb should stir to succour the nominal chief of the rebellion.

The Vicegerent, with all his power, had to encounter not a little trouble and vexation before he could put his nobility and retinue in motion from the capital. Fearing lest his ability to give substantial rewards might possibly cease ere long, most of them now made a rush to get something, with permission to enjoy it at home, rather than take the field against princes of whom *one or other might soon become emperor.*



It may seem strange to simple mortals, that even the Great Mogul, in his most palmy days, could not make courtiers content. The bestowers of patronage themselves are in general sadly ignorant of the obligations which it entails on them. For their benefit, I will try to enunciate the principle, without undertaking to expound the law of expectation which ought to guide patrons. Suppose the initial quantity of favour, and the impulse conferring it, known, both, on no account stopping at the first step, must continue to augment in something like a geometrical ratio, through a series of preferments, until the recipient declare himself satisfied. Any retardment or perturbation affecting the result, never fails to cancel gratitude, and to produce indignation of an intensity varying according to circumstances. Dara, the magnificent and generous, still traditionally remembered as the "Good Sultan," had not pleased one of a hundred of his (omedwars or) hoppers, who were such as surround most princes.

The poet beginning life penniless, who had received a grant of three villages to enable him to sing without toiling for bread, gave vent to abundant wrath in his domestic circle, because dunderheads had obtained nobility with commanderies of horse, while he, a man of genius, must be content with the empty title of Bahadur (or knight.) The amiable spendthrift, rescued from bankruptcy and degradation by the payment of his debts and restoration to his estate, secretly threatened to transfer his allegiance to a candidate for the throne, who would give him something more than was already his own. Military claimants, however, are in all ages and regions the most insatiable. In the cold climate and staid position of England at this moment, is there one inexperienced old gentleman of fortune who hopes to provide for a young friend, be he ever so humble, by procuring him an ensigncy? He will certainly find that the youth whom he thus bids aspire to laurelled greatness, will consider himself flagrantly ill used if not "purchased up" to a lieutenant-colonelcy, the limit of the purchasing power. The officers of the Mogul army looked to similar promotion on a mightier scale. Those who had seen an enemy at all, or faced the least danger, demanded the rewards due to the greatest conquerors. Those who never unsheathed their swords, boldly urged a right to compensation for not having got opportunities to earn distinction. The noble commanding five thousand, felt neglected because not raised to the grade of seven or ten thousand horse. The possessor of that honour and authority, thought himself shamefully overlooked, seeing that he had not yet received a landed estate from the crown. One invested with all the foregoing shook with rage (in privacy) at his rejected suit for the government of a province. In short, the cry of slighted merit was more than general. The natives of India, without thinking of legal privilege, exercise a freedom of remark which outstrips the *most liberal press in Christendom*. The changes on regret and

vituperation were never rung against rulers by disappointed courtiers with louder wail and moan than resounded over the inner recesses and the terraces, the *underoons* and *chabcoteras* of Delhi, among the kindred of Dara's train safely enconced from foes, spies and reporters, when he refused to provide for hangers-on, before running the risk of losing power to do so. The unyielding prince answered all petitions by one intimation; that desiring the attendance of none who were not prepared to share alike his good and bad fortune, he would, while the succession was disputed, consider solicitations for pensions and retirement as resignations of his service. He got at last under weigh.

The only wife of Dara was Nadira Bana, the daughter of his uncle Sultan Purvis; a woman of placid good sense, who, declining to dissipate her spirits abroad, or to ruffle her temper in the concerns of others, concentrated every soft attraction in the circle of her domestic life. Disgusted in discharging the duties of his station with the perverseness of a world that he strove to amend, and too often writhing under the wounds of keen sensibility, Dara ever found the chamber of the Princess an abode of peace, where infectious good humour and heart-sprung affection shed their balm over his mind. The Princess, with all their household, according to custom, now prepared to accompany him. A description of the idle and extravagant pomp of their march would weary Europeans. I will venture to point out prominent objects. The suite of courtiers of both sexes, including tributary kings, who paid devotion to the rising sun on this occasion, would make the most splendid retinue of European Royalty shrink by comparison into the insignificance of a puppet show. During the procession, every individual keeps his appropriate place, the Prince, generally on horseback, moves foremost, followed by the various equipages for his conveyance. The travelling throne, canopied, having windows, adorned with all that is costly and magnificent, is borne on men's shoulders. The elephants come next, displaying the ensigns of imperial rank from their backs, caparisoned with broad cloths, velvets or satins, which have borders finely variegated, and terminating in flowing fringes. His personal attendants in a phalanx of vehicles, and then those on horseback, move immediately behind. To right and left, troops of chosen horsemen, carrying silver maces, keep back the crowd, and any person who may press forward or inadvertently raise the dust before the Prince. The nobles follow in due order, each a lesser monarch preceding his subjects. The line of elephants extending two miles, surmounted by their towers and castles, looked like a chain of hills in motion, with a sea of human creatures rolling at their feet. The train of the Princess, generally proceeding by a parallel road, formed however the most interesting spectacle. Sixty of those gigantic animals, more superbly decorated, moved behind her, bearing aloft the impenetrable habitations of beauty that seemed to float in mid

air. These fairy fortresses, latticed and enveloped in a net of embroidery, fluted in long array in all the splendours of gold and azure with which they were inlaid and painted. Each lady advanced, as her lord, by the other route, a planet encircled by dependent satellites. After these magnates came the crowd of less pompous, but equally picturesque litters, borne between two camels, in which ladies of the second class preceded the showy palanquins of untitled gentlewomen.

The camp, which they reached every morning before the day became hot, was in appearance and essentially a portable city. The royal tents were pitched within a square extending three hundred paces on each side. The enclosing walls, rising eight feet from the ground and attached to poles, were kept erect by numerous ropes. The whole being made of red cloth, while inferior persons used white, and elevated on a terrace or platform of earth, the pavilions of the Prince shone conspicuous at a great distance. Four streets, constituting the grand bazaar or market place, opened towards the royal square from the cardinal points. In the triangular spaces again, between the limbs of the cross thus exhibited, quarters were allotted to the nobles, each of whom imitated his master in the arrangements of his camp. The largest of the red tents, and that next the entrance into the square, was called the Hall of Audience, containing a throne and state canopy of purple velvet, occupied at the morning levee. The next in size, more inward, bore the name of the Bath, and was used for the evening reception of the courtiers. Then came the Privy Council Tent, and close by the private apartments of Dara, which adjoined the suite inhabited by the Princess, surrounded here, as everywhere, by innumerable attendants.

The interior of these cloth palaces was lined with chintz, silks, a thousand varieties of velvet and satin, and according to its use, with the many sorts of tasteful embroidery. Persian carpets overspread the floors, spotted with parallelograms of brocade and pillows for sitting or reposing upon.

Oriental splendour has been very differently estimated, though never well understood in the West. The works and spectacles of the East are not made for microscopical inspection, but for effect on the eye and the imagination of distant multitudes. When examined minutely, the several parts may appear rude or tawdry. But viewed in the mass, their magnitude has an air of sublimity; and the contrast of vivid colours gleaming over an extent of space, gives the impression of magnificence and beauty. What opinion might Dara's Master of Ceremonies, if conjured from the shades, form of George the Fourth's coronation? He would perhaps take things literally: the most potent of kings for some first magistrate or mayor, and the proud noblemen who surround him, for the veritable grooms, cup-bearers, and dog keepers which they affect to be. Dara, though innate-

, and endued with elegant fancy, was yet an Asiatic and outward show. His wishes were gratified almost beyond all possibility. His present resources from the imperial treasury, equivalent to two millions sterling, did not equal in value the presents which, agreeably to established custom, he received from rich subjects and dependent sovereigns.

Concerning his city of nobility and courtiers to the table land of Agra, on which the British post of Neemuch now stands, he was well prepared to watch and regulate the operations of his agents in the adjoining provinces.

Shah Jangzeb's part in the recent transactions could not be ascertained, though his accession to the rebellion, and his disposition to profit by it, were not in the least doubted. Having done something respecting the negotiation with the Governor of Agra, and not knowing what formidable adherents the rebels of Golconda might have acquired to its present owner, he determined not to be drawn from his central position by any demonstration of the enemy.

The greatest inconvenience which he experienced since his departure from the want of a commander in charge of the army, whom he could implicitly trust. The superannuated ruler still insisting on nominally doing everything in the name of his eldest son, was very liable to be misled by artful advisers about his person. The Lady Jehanara, able and as she was, could not seclude his Majesty from her side and party in the interest of the heir-apparent's enemies; and she could rely on any person in the city to head the troops against a down insurrection, in the event of an attempt being made to seize Shah Jehan's person and rule in his name.

## CHAPTER XI.

The Chief of Surat now assembled his Council to deliberate upon the report of Mr Jiger when he returned from his embassy. They resolved unanimously,—1st, That Prince Morad calling himself Sawney, Emperor or King of Hindostan, having haughtily demanded all claims to just remuneration for services to be rendered by the Honourable Company, applying at the same time parading epithets to them and to their representative in Agra and forfeited every right to the assistance and friendship of the Company's authority. 2d, That under existing circumstances, it was expedient for the English nation to support his Imperial Majesty's Willy-a-head against the pretensions of his rebellious subjects to the throne of Delhi. 3d, That the force commanded by the Lieutenant-Colonel Dressup should immediately take the field to co-operate with the armies of Generals Pin and Leith,

the secret allies of the company now happily in actual possession of Guzerat, to reduce that province virtually to the English power, the nominal cession of it being reserved for a political negotiation, which the chief himself proposed to conduct in person. 4th, That the highly important information, which enabled the council to take effectual advantage of an auspicious crisis, was entirely derived from Patrick Jiger, Esquire, who in his capacity of Envoy had deserved well of his employers, for timely detecting the insincerity of a faithless ruler, for manifesting, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, firm yet conciliatory conduct, which upholding the dignity of his country, gained him the friendship of a prince utterly hostile to the object of his mission. 5th, That the talents, address, and superior knowledge of Indian diplomacy thus displayed by Mr Jiger, had proved him eminently well qualified to hold the situation of High Commissioner with the army of Guzerat. 6th, The province of Guzerat, and all ports in possession of the enemy, being declared in a state of blockade, that distinguished officer, Captain J. B. Webfoot, the Honourable Company's principal maritime servant in India, was appointed commander of the fleet, with the rank of Admiral, a designation granted at his own particular request.

Who, guided by the common light of history, would suppose that Dalbracken, by kissing a wayward girl, had driven the Chief of Surat from his *middle course* to these decided measures? Yet so it was. The western bastion of Sir Josiah Child's empire seemed already won by his treaties with the two renegades. What visions of glory and dominion now flitted before his mental optics!

The heir-apparent, as he requested, was put in direct communication with the commander of the army, whom he desired to move upon Ahmedabad, and to expect ample support from the Rajpoots under the Maha Rana. But Colonel Dressup received orders, which he considered more imperative, to push forward without waiting for any such co-operation, and to get military possession of the province, leaving Mr Guttlethorpe to explain the precipitancy to his brother-in-law.

This armament of so much hope and anxiety finally marched forth, the admiration of natives and Europeans. Nothing had ever been witnessed in those realms equal to the correct movements and imposing appearance of the regulars. The fifteen thousand irregulars not having undergone proper discipline, gave the Commander-in-chief considerable uneasiness. Express orders were issued, and duly explained to them by the Adjutant-General, directing all their turbans to be blue, of uniform shape, and worn sloping over the left ear, the upper lip to remain unshaved; every horseman unencumbered and ready for action, to move in his place, the whole body proceeding in close column of troops. It was lamentable to see with what contempt of authority these unworthy aspirants to fame bestrode the whole of their

bedding and spare apparel above the saddle, carried their kitchen utensils rattling on the crupper, and straggled over the country like sheep at pasture. Nay, women and children sometimes clung behind the undisciplined. Their immediate commanders, moreover, resisted the salutary practice of taking muster as inquisitorial tyranny. Though vigilance was strictly enjoined them on all occasions, and the necessity inculcated of having visiting rounds, they not only neglected but derided the harassing duty of keeping watch when no enemy was even in sight. Captain de Jungle had the misfortune to be laughed at and insulted in his very first attempt to establish uniformity in head dresses and moustaches. An opportunity here occurred of setting an example to the rest, by shooting two men who prominently disobeying orders, had violated the articles of war. But though condemned by a court-martial, and about to be executed according to rule, their lawless comrades turned out to a man and forcibly released the criminals. Colonel Dressup declaring it easier to fight than command such a rabble, dismissed them from the service of the Honourable Company. But what were his amazement and indignation when they scornfully refused to take themselves out of his camp until he realized all the expectations of plunder and preferment which induced them to leave home!

The only branch of discipline which Colonel Dressup neglected in the regulars, was what is brought to such perfection in these times, the creation of mutual good will, or "harmony" among the officers, by making them eat and drink together. This desirable end is attained by means analogous in principle to a weight, which keeping the mercury elevated in a barometer, is expected to preserve fair weather. Yet without any act of martial legislation, messes were formed spontaneously. Besides the party of the great, consisting of the High Commissioner, the Commander of the Forces and Major Williams, the most noted had Dalbracken, Cambridge, Bethel, De Jungle, De Sylva, and Steelbow for its members.

Colonel Dressup preserving a profound secrecy in the most trivial of his proceedings, which he pronounced the soul of military operations, was likewise exemplarily prudent. Though now avowedly marching to join friendly armies, he prepared and put himself in readiness to encounter an enemy. Suspending the condign punishment of the refractory irregulars until further orders, and resolving in the meantime to divide and govern, he formed all his troops into brigades. The general and subordinate commanders then appeared as follows:—

Lieutenant Colonel DRESSUP, Commanding the Forces,

## CAVALRY.

Captain DALBRACKEN, commanding the Cavalry.

Captain CAMBRIDGE, Regular Brigade.

Captain STEELBOW, Irregular Brigade.

## INFANTRY.

Major WILLIAMS, commanding the Infantry.

Major WILLIAMS, Regular Brigade.

Captain BETHEL, Irregular Brigade.

Captain DE JUNGLE, men of the Irregulars to see the exigencies of his numerous duties.

Captain MICHAEL DE SYLVA, commanding Artillery.

Captain JOHN DE JUNGLE, Adjutant-General and Quarter-Master-General, in charge of the Intelligence Department.

It is here observable that the regular infantry were considered too important a part of the army to be entrusted to the immediate management of an inexperienced officer. Colonel Leith saw daily more and more reason for adopting precautionary measures. Neither Sevajee nor General Leith had replied to his letters proposing the establishment of regular communications between them. What was still worse, both were in the month of March requested by him to stand fast; and he had particularly desired the Maharatta to retain his position, in order to prevent the English rear from any annoyance in case Morad shoultach a party from the Deccan. Leith's behaviour seemed culpable to some omission in the adjustment of relations, too probably neglected by one, whom the Colonel called a *civilian*: but as he approached rapidly, it was necessary to come to an explanation. Dalbracken, receiving a summons through the Adjutant-General, repaired to head-quarters, and got the following instructions on this important subject, in his presence, and with the full approbation, of the High Commissioner. "Captain Dalbracken," began the Lieutenant-Colonel, "as it has been reported to me that that you speak Moors more than any other officer under my command, I have to request that you will proceed at daybreak and deliver this letter to General Leith. My orders are, further, that you procure an answer containing his reasons for not having yet fulfilled his engagements with the Chief of the English nation in the East Indies. If he shew any disposition to supersede me, be pleased to explain to him, that no precedent exists to warrant an officer of irregular troops, such as he commands, in assuming the command of a regular army like mine. Expecting General Leith to reply upon me, I beg to mention, that I shall be happy to receive

at breakfast to-morrow or next day. Knowing the Hindoo tongue perfectly, you might make your way through his outposts without risk; but for your greater security amongst undisciplined troops, I have directed a trumpeter to precede your guide."

The cautious commander, however, thinking it best to distrust a turn-coat, desired to know something of his strength and equipments, lest friendship should end in hostility. With this view, he next delivered his secret instructions in the same tone. These comprehended the most approved modes of acting the spy in the mask of a trusted messenger with the least possible hazard of being hanged. Dressup closed the interview by delivering a huge letter addressed to "General Jacob Benjamin Leith, commanding a detachment, Camp," and endorsed, "S. Dressup, Lieutenant-Colonel commanding English army in Guzerat." Inside was one from Mr Guttlethorpe to his ally.

This equivocal personage, designated Yacoob ben Leeth by the Orientals, affecting to have recently caught the new light of the East, from the orbit of Aurungzeb's star, had been striving hard to become a saint. He flattered himself with having some little success. The smashing of two large Hoonymauns, or monkey-gods of stone, attested his piety on the present march, and with what sincerity the reader may judge, he vowed to slaughter the whole host of Infidels at the end of it. Having laid aside his much beloved hooka, or pipe—because the use of tobacco was not then quite orthodox—he was sitting cross-legged on a carpet, rather surly for want of the long-cherished stimulus, transacting business amidst his staff and personal attendants. One—two—three shots, rung in succession from an outskirt of the camp.

His courier-spies rushed to the tent from all points with what intelligence they had. "The enemy, my lord; their trumpet has sounded!" cried one, and he paused for breath. "An agent, my lord, is come from the Christians!" said another. "The Infidels, please your Highness, have sent a Mussulman who speaks Persian, and wants to bring a letter to the presence."—"Admit him if a true believer," was the phlegmatic mandate. The cause of the shots was what Dressup considered the voice of peace. His trumpeter, obeying his Colonel, had sounded a parley as soon as he came to the first out-post, which the barbarous Indians taking for the signal of an assault, discharged their matchlocks, though fortunately without effect. It might certainly have been otherwise: but Dalbracken, throwing down his sword and riding up to them, explained his errand. His language and manners pleasing the people entirely, they agreed, as the French compliment has it, that he was one of themselves. General Leith received him, raising the right hand to his own forehead and slightly bending the neck, but not rising up. After seeming to hesitate, he allowed his visitor to sit.



"You are sent on business I hear, from the English camp?"—"Yes, sir; th's letter and its enclosure will, I presume, inform you fully for what purpose I come." The question and answer passed in stiff, uncomplimentary Persian, the bystanders wondering at the Envoy's tone of equality. How well, thought he, the fellow plays the counterfeit! who would suppose him to be a European? "Why," cried Leith, "does this foolish master of the English traders plague me with these up-and-down scrawls that none but Infidels can read? I want none of his wares! What would he buy or sell here?"—"General Leith," replied Dalbracken, in English, "this is really too much: you don't, I hope, mean to insult one who is your countryman, relation, indeed, if you are of the Leiths of that ilk." Every ear in the tent was pricked up at the extraordinary sound of these words. "What language is that? Who knows what he says? Call ye this fellow a true believer?" said the General in wrath and astonishment.—"This fellow," resumed the other, "is at least as true a believer as you." And he spoke in Oordoo, that none present might misunderstand him. Whilst all eyes stared at the temerity of the stranger, he appeared to find both his evil and his good genius in the company. An odd looking person sat in a corner, apparently disdaining communion with mortals, who, half-shutting his up-lifted eyes, ejaculated an imprecation at every pause of the conference. "Exterminate the dogs of Jesus!"—"Send their souls quick, O quick to perdition!"—"Shield me from the Infidel's foul breath!" But a youth of most gentlemanly deportment sought eagerly to promote a good understanding between his Commander and the Envoy. This was Azim Khan, whom I may call Chief of the Staff. "A good Mussulman," observed he, "may understand Christian languages; but, to explain his business, the gentleman will perhaps translate the letter entrusted to him by his principal." It was consequently opened, and he glanced over the contents of the packet. The substance of the Colonel's despatch has already been given in his own words. The Chief's epistle began with a laudatory introduction of Dressup to his future companion in arms; begged Leith to conform strictly to the treaty concluded in his name by "the trusty and accredited agent Joota Ram Jee on the one part, and by him, Mr Jehoshaphat Guttlethorpe, on the other." That important document had been lodged, it was announced, for reference, if necessary, in the hands of the High Commissioner. It concluded by calling the attention of his ally to the rough draft of an order enclosed, which was to be issued when the two armies united, for the laudable purpose of conciliating the prejudices of Mahomedans as well as Hindoos. "My predecessors and I," the Chief remarked, "have for many years prohibited the slaughter of beeves in public, as a practice disagreeable to the mild spirit of the Gentoo faith. But having received information which I

end on, that the Great Mogul and his principal nobility Mussulmans, it behoves us to treat their superstition with at much indulgence. You will therefore perceive that I ken the best means in my power to prevent the killing, ig, and ill treatment of swine in the English camp." ken, who scarcely suspected the fallibility of Mr Gutpe's diplomacy, was totally unable to conceive how the rs of Mahommed were to be conciliated by this attention welfare of hogs : not considering, like the Chief, that be- hindos refrain from eating cows, and Mussulmans from pigs, their reasons must be the same ; and therefore both d the same act of toleration. Being accordingly unable, refore unwilling, to attempt an explanation, he returned ters and kept silent. "Now, sir," resumed the unap- General, "what are the contents?"—"The contents, I , had better be discussed at a private interview," was ly.—"I grant no private interviews to unbelievers or yents. I command you to speak aloud and make known isiness without delay." To these fierce demands, Dal- i rejoined in the same tone. "Do not think to frighten sir ; bridle your rage, and act so sensibly as to depute tleman to hear me in another apartment ; but a second like the last, shall make one who despises lypocrisy cover rogance with confusion."—"Am I defied, reviled ? Will to see me shoe-beaten in my own tent, Azim Khan ?"— ord," said the former intercessor, interrupting the Gene- it to issue harsh commands, "My Lord, the stranger is norant, but he means no disrespect. There is some r mistake which we may soon discover. You had better i, sir, at once, and without being angry, why you favour hness with a visit."—"Well," cried Dalbracken, "since be so, I come to request that General Leeth will imme- comply with the stipulations of his treaty with Mr horpe."—"Treaty," roared Yacoob ben Leeth, "what

You are commanded to explain your meaning, sir."— sir, I will explain my meaning. You have solemnly ouself to unite your force to the English army, and to ate in whatever it shall undertake. This letter from manding officer demands the immediate fulfilment of gagement." The face of him who was thus addressed ly swelled into a ferocious state of distension as he , foreboding wrath and bloodshed. Before Dalbracken speaking, he began to bellow like a maniac,—"'Tis a ruin me ! Liar ! Infidel ! Huckster ! Slave of Huck-

When out of breath, he grasped a dagger, but falling as he attempted to rise, the bad omen made him depute ce of executioner to other hands. "Orderly, take that a Christian out of the camp, and sweep off his head at rest ravine !" Dalbracken sprung to his feet, crossed his

arms, and stood with the stern composure of one who sees fate impending which he cannot shun. Azim Khan, seizing his arm, was drawing him away, when he began to remonstrate, or rather to denounce the cowardly advantage that his countryman was taking of power to screen his apostasy and double treachery. The friendly monitor now whispered,—“Unless you forbear to provoke the Nabob, there is really no hope of your safety.” Then addressing his Commander, he said,—“The youth’s conduct certainly deserves death, my Lord; but he is an envoy, though of Infidels, and I fear your Highness’s honour requires us to spare his life, which is exceedingly worthless, given or taken, compared with the good name of a great man.” Seeing the despot pause to digest the flattery, he added,—“Allow your servant to punish the ignorant stranger more befittingly.” Beckoning assent to the proposal with all the insolence of unchecked authority, he permitted the chief of his staff to remove the Christian. He escorted him half way to the English camp.

When the two young men were by themselves, little apology or argument was required to satisfy Dalbracken, that the impolite expressions used by the Mussulman were necessary to divert the military tyrant from his sanguinary purpose. In a few minutes more he received entire conviction of Mr Guttlethorpe’s being a dupe, and of his having literally caught a Tartar in Yacoob ben Leeth, who was not at all of the Leiths of that ilk, but a native of Bucharia, of Arabian origin. Of this fact I had a perfect knowledge from the beginning; but besides wishing to explain the warmth of Dalbracken, which has been greatly censured, by putting the reader as nearly as I could in the Envoy’s situation, I knew from seeing in my peculiar way much of political life, the irregularity and impropriety of divulging information until it came officially before me. I am now, however, at liberty to state, that the “trusty and accredited agent Joota Ramjee” was a rogue, employed by the worthy Chief’s moonshee, or Mahomedan secretary, who presented himself, and concluded the sham treaty in the name of Yacoob ben Leeth, which lofty personage knew as little of his existence as of his acts. This transaction, which was so near ending in tragedy, cost, I lament to add, a large sum of money, that the conspirators in fraud took as the wages of iniquity to the great men whom they pretended to have seduced from their allegiance.

Dalbracken now felt utterly ashamed of his credulity, and of the confidence which he had placed in Mr Guttlethorpe’s judgment on the authority of Sir Josiah Child. He tried, however, to talk lightly of it to his preserver, whom he esteemed more and more on acquaintance.—“Pray,” said he to him, “who is the devout gentleman that took so much interest in my damnation? I presume he is your Nabob’s domestic chaplain?”—“He,” replied the other, “is poor Gazi-o-Deen the Syud, whose

brother was lately put to death at Ahmedabad. He wants an intercessor with Prince Aurungzeb, through whom he expects to get back his share of the family property, which has been all confiscated. "Now," resumed Dalbracken, "I certainly see your General's conduct in a different light; but without giving my opinion of him, permit me to express surprise that one possessing that nobility of mind which men of all nations can perceive, should hold a subordinate place, bending to the caprices of any person so vulgar in soul as Yacoob ben Leeth."—"You mistake the Nabob's character," said he; "he is a great captain. I was reared, indeed, under nobler protection, being of the *house-born* of Sultan Dara—but to his Highness, alas! I am not permitted to return." As the subject affected the young man, who was evidently, from losing favour with the heir-apparent, cast by fortune into a situation disagreeable to him, Dalbracken turned the discourse to the disposition and habits of his former master. Being now in sight of Dressup's camp, they exchanged swords, embraced, and parted as friends who wish to meet again.

When Dressup heard the result of his mission, he instantly determined to unsheath his sword. An inspection of arms and accoutrements took place immediately, and after making the regulars perform certain essential evolutions with their wonted precision, he issued a general order for the army to move after dark. Dalbracken, giving him a pretty accurate description of the intervening ground between the two camps, the Colonel was guided by his information in selecting the position in which he resolved to come to action with the perfidious enemy. Yacoob ben Leeth on the other side, perceiving what a handle the assertions of the infidel envoy would be to his rivals, in throwing suspicion on his allegiance and orthodoxy, boiled with tenfold rage to illustrate both in the flames of victory and the blood of the unbelieving. But I tremble and must pause, whilst each of the heroes is pondering on the surest mode of urging his host to the destruction of the other. An awful hour approaches!

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## CHAPTER XII.

SECRECY being, for numerous reasons, exceedingly desirable in all military operations until the result of them is known, Colonel Dressup communicated his plan to no person in camp, not even to his adjutant-general. I may now mention, however, that his matured design comprised no more than an attempt to throw irregular infantry as sharp-shooters into the jungle on the enemy's left, and to dislodge two small parties of their troops from a chain of mounds

commanding their centre, which seemed an excellent position for the English artillery. Attaining these objects, he hoped, by virtue of cannon and matchlocks, to put Leeth's army to flight, while occupying ground which the host of Mogul cavalry could not reach. With this view the Colonel advanced two miles, and ordered Major Williams to take possession of the village of Hansgunje, a place containing no soldiers, but protected from robbers on horseback by a ditch and mud-wall. Within these slender fortifications the baggage of the army was deposited, and the reserve stationed under the command of Captain Bethel, who received stern injunctions to defend this post to the last drop of his blood. Proceeding with the rest of the force four hundred paces farther, the commander halted to distribute it along the bank of a water-course, called Hansnulla. A large river flowed over it in the rainy season, but it was now nearly dry. The stream often changing its channel, had, in a long series of years, formed a little valley between high banks, by gradually bearing away the soft alluvial soil till it came to hard clay or solid rock. Those portions of the wide bed which the current seldom or never disturbed, were covered with new deposits of fertile mud, derived from the overcharged water stagnating above them. Several acres of this quality, cultivated for the growth of melons, were strongly fenced in to prevent the depredations of cattle and certain equestrian travellers, who, though very prone to regale at the expense of the husbandman, are not fond of dismounting. To the right of these melon beds the road crossed the Nulla or river, and forty yards of clear space lay. The remainder of the valley bore much long reedy grass and a few straggling Mimosas. The entrance to it from the higher ground on either side was through a long gorge cutting the bank.

The plain in front was covered with a low prickly jungle, rarely exhibiting a tree twenty feet high, impenetrable to horse or artillery, and traversed by an indifferent highway, from the sides of which the bushes had been cleared to some distance. The whole expanse exhibited a dead level, except where a chain of mounds united below, but dividing into separate tops above, ran parallel to the line of the Nulla, about five hundred paces forward. They might be from fifteen to twenty feet in height, and tradition pronounced them the rubbish of brick-kilns, which in forgotten ages supplied materials for building the vanished city of Hanspoora. Yacoo ben Leeth had posted a party of three hundred Aligholes on each end of this eminence, to keep a good look out, and eventually exterminate any of the infidels who might wish to disturb him at night. These men were Afghans who got high pay on condition of always taking the post of danger and leading forlorn hopes. Dissolute and ferocious creatures, they took the lives of others without remorse, but extravagant fatalists in practice, scorned to take care of their own. The captain of the Aligholes nearest Dressup, as directed, told them to set a watch. The heroes appointed to this duty, however, resolving that no band of Hucksters

from Surat would dare to approach them, and ejaculating their creed, "whatever is decreed must come to pass," wrapped themselves in their sheets, ears, eyes, head and all, and were soon in a state to dream of the hills of Cabool. Eastward, within range of a six pounder, extended the formidable array of the rebel army. The Mogul cavalry in two divisions disposed to right and left, with artillery between them, and the crowd of despised infantry behind, lay under orders to march so soon as a white horse should become visible a bow-shot from the spectator, and cut the English dogs, and all unclean beasts who served them, to pieces, in the name of the Prophet. The gallant Dressup meanwhile having captured Hans-ganje by two in the morning, was waiting with equal impatience for daylight.

Major Williams, with three thousand regular infantry, and De Jungle with his irregulars, selected for special duty, now marched beyond the Nulla. Cambridge was instructed to maintain the ground he occupied on the left of the line "till further orders." De Sylva, stationing himself in the centre, was to open his guns on any of the enemy whom he might see in motion. Dalbracken, at the head of his own and Steelbow's horse, was to remain on the right, watching the only route by which, after a long circuit, his flank could be turned, and so check any movement of the rebels in that direction. The nature of the ground in front affording sufficient protection to the main body, the Commander now joined the advance in person, determined to display the power of disciplined valour, led on by a genuine disciplinarian, and at the same time to appropriate the laurels which it must presently won. Before setting off, he desired De Jungle to "scour the wood, defending the flank of the regulars, and otherwise giving such assistance as might appear necessary until further orders, unless compelled by circumstances to alter his course." This seemed rather indefinite, but the sequel shewed the latent wisdom it was pregnant with. Dressup now fully prepared, rushed on at quick time with his regular brigade, and finding the Aligholes next him fast asleep, put every man of them to death without danger or opposition. With the most laudable expedition, it took fully half an hour to perform this "duty," including the customary search for valuables on the bodies of the slain. The time thus lost was full of events. Leeth awaking in dread, lest the unbelieving foe should have run away to escape his wrath, heard with amazement of their attack on the mounds, and ordered his guns to be fired at the audacious enemy. Hundreds of his rockets also filled the air. The bustle which ensued among the Moguls, leading the vigilant De Sylva to think some of them in motion, he discharged his train too, so that sulphurous clouds arose, making the dawn invisible, and reverberating peals sounded from both sides in a mingling roar, to which the thunder of heaven were but a lullaby. De Jungle had, in obedience to instructions, got amongst the brush-wood, when a terrific shower of balls, rending trees, and pounding stones to dust, fell around him, and threatened

to continue. "This circumstance," said he to himself, "compels me to alter my course." So back he went with all his men to the bed of the river, and lay down in the melon beds. He could not have found more secure quarters for his warriors, as neither shot nor cold steel was likely to reach them there.

The Colonel's regulars having now tasted blood, evinced a ravening appetite for more: and when called on to fall in and advance, began to run with tumultuous eagerness towards the other party of Aligholes. Nothing could more horrify this worshipper of drill than to see its rules violated in the moment of victory. An awful example was indispensable: but like Cæsar, Dressup loved clemency, so dooming only one young havildar or sergeant, who was striding forward at least five feet out of his place, the stern Martinet cleft his scull with a stroke of the sabre, much admired by scientific friends of the performer. This signal punishment gained immediate attention to the words "halt! dress!" But unfortunately, while the Commander flew from rank to rank restoring the lost step, the Aligholes, hitherto waiting for help from their camp, wide awake and ready at last, imputed this delay to fear of them, and dashed furiously on, sword in hand, with loud yells, to avenge the death of their comrades. At the very sight of this pack of opening blood-hounds, the regulars, with their spirit depressed to panic, ran in utter confusion, soon to be overtaken and slaughtered with as little mercy as they had shewn to their victims. Officers and men made for the jungle, the friendly thickets of which sheltered the survivors. On seeing the fugitives dispersed over the road and space about it, Leeth hurried out five thousand cavalry to dispatch them, and afterwards destroy the remainder of the English. The fire of artillery, on account of friends and foes, being intermixed, had now ceased in both armies: and the Mogul horse, for whom little was left by the Aligholes between their camp and the river, proceeded to cross it at the usual ford near the melon beds. Here De Jungle, still lying in force, had an excellent view of the cavalcade at the distance of forty paces.

More than a thousand of the Moguls had crossed, before it occurred to the prudential Captain that he might shoot at them, with perfect safety to himself and his warriors. At his command two thousand matches glamed behind a long line of parapet formed by the fence. Two thousand muzzles pointed with all the steadiness of security, began to pour a wide-spread, irregular, and incessant fire on the defenceless enemy, whom the narrowness of the passage compelled to move very slowly. I lament my inability to depict the scenes of this eventful day in the order of their occurrence, since they were partly simultaneous, and distinct as to place. Dalbracken and Steelbow sat on their saddles beside the High Commissioner, on his camel, in anxiety and dread of what they beheld. Mr Jiger watched the progress of the troops with becoming interest, shaking his right elbow, and fingering with the left hand, as if playing *his fiddle*, to the forward march of the Commander of the Forces.

But when disaster ensued, he pocketed both hands, and sat motionless. Unused to battle, he next amused Steelbow by ducking, or bobbing as it is technically designated, to every ball that flew over head. No remonstrance, however, could remove him from a post of danger. Dalbracken, feeling his inexperience, begged the Commissioner's opinion whether he should attempt to succour the Colonel without receiving orders from him. "If I attack the enemy without authority, my scull may be cleft too: if we stand still here, there is a strong probability of our being cut to pieces by these horsemen. I want to know what you all think." Jiger went off like an air gun. "I never interfere in military affairs: military men are much better judges themselves."—"That's d—d proper," said Steelbow, "'tis not every civilian that would talk so sensibly: and for my part, though I have seen a good deal of service, to be sure, I never saw any body fight like this General Leeth before; so I don't know what the devil to advise. Ha! there it is, that's your sort; Jack of the Jungle is at them, or I'm a sea cook!" At this moment the Adjutant General's matchlocks began to roar: bullets whizzed over, and fell around in hundreds. The commandant of cavalry ordered all to wheel about, and move out of the line of fire. They were obeying, with the horses' heads turned towards the road, just as the foremost of the enemy's stragglers emerged from the bed of the river. These few men, not doubting that they were to be charged, whilst the sudden and portentous sound of fire-arms arose behind, turned back to wait for reinforcement. Nothing could seem more unchivalrous and ignoble, to Dalbracken, than now to fall on antagonists incapable of resisting. But an odd accident occurred which hurried him amongst them. The High Commissioner, following in the rear, one of De Jungle's balls struck the hip of the camel, on which the animal, raging with pain, plunging and bellowing, put the rider in a predicament at once exceedingly dangerous and productive of irreverent mirth to persons of inferior dignity. Those of more praiseworthy feeling, however, soon had reason to wish that he might be thrown: for the camel continued to caper with blindfold violence, until the gristle of its nose, in which the bridle was fastened, gave way, and then unrestrained and unmanageable, it followed the retiring horsemen, till they mixed with a multitude in the gorge. Dalbracken, attended by Davy and four orderlies, galloped after Jiger, but could not overtake him until the desperate beast was bounding amidst the ranks of the enemy.

They cried in a chorus of fear, "Return to camp, we are attacked in front." Sheep at pasture are not so susceptible of terror as soldiers once frightened. Yet some will hardly believe that this onset of the camel caused irretrievable confusion, making those next it drive back their comrades, to knock down each other, and perish before the relentless matchlocks. Several, unable to get out of the way when reduced to absolute despair, turned round and prepared to dispatch the helpless Commissioner, who escaped the first thrust by the camel's taking an unforeseen leap, and before another had



reached its vitals Dalbracken's sword shivered the Mogul's spear. With the assistance of his attendants, he hemmed in the animal, while Kirkland pulled Jiger from his perilous seat, and bore him away, laid across the pommel of his saddle, as butchers carry calves in Scotland. During the rescue, just described, the Commander of the Forces, creeping from the thicket, displayed the uncaptured colours in the post of the irregulars. You have perhaps seen prints of the famous Indian picture of the two heroes meeting in the melon field, at the moment of victory. The great body of the surviving regulars, however, had already passed the river, and did not stop until they got within the walls of the village, reporting every one of their officers killed. Bethel, in consequence, led on his regiment of infantry, and reached the spot whence Williams had first moved, at the same fortunate crisis, distinguished by the re-appearance of Dressup from the Jungle, and Dalbracken, with Davy's noble luggage, from the terrified rout of the enemy. But though not seen in his own camp, and therefore not applauded until afterwards known, the practice of Captain De Sylva proved most efficient. Early in the morning, as Yacoob ben Leeth advanced in his lofty seat, to direct the onset of the horse, a cannon shot carried away the hind leg of his elephant, and brought him to the ground. The General being stunned, and his army, naturally concluding that an artillerist who could hit an object so far off, would miss nothing if they went nearer, forbore to attempt the occupation of the mounds, and kept their own park at its original distance. By these combined operations, the battle was now unequivocally won. The remains of the Mogul cavalry reached their lines, leaving the heaps of dead weltering in the bed of the Nulla.

I pass over the congratulations of the victors, as they stood encircling their commander, on the high bank overlooking the scene of havoc. A more ghastly and humiliating spectacle was never presented to the eye of man, except in war, of which it is but a fair specimen. Seventeen hundred human beings, mostly in the flower of youth, strewed amongst the carcasses of horses, unlike heroes on the stage, dying with grace and dignity, lay as they had fallen, in attitudes and postures vilely discordant with the respect of all good minds for the dead. Scattered amidst these, and buried under them, masses of receding life exhibited the moving limbs of men and animals, as they moaned in protracted agony.

De Jungle, only in his warlike noviciate, could not help the effeminacy of nature from appearing in the writhing of his features. Yet the heroic spirit prevailed, and broke forth in unidiomatic English, as he exclaimed, surveying his own work, "Excellent glory!" This officer, rising so fast into eminence, knew all the words in the Dictionary, but not their combinations, except in one department of literature, which, stereotyped in his mind, was now put in requisition to record the victory that he had mainly contributed to gain. Colonel Dressup and his adjutant-general retiring, for this purpose, *to a private tent*, drew up the following official despatch to the Chief

of Surat, explanatory of the operations which commanded success, agreeably to the rules and usages of war. The style will be recognised as Captain De Jungle's, whose application to the study of martial composition before he took the field, has been duly related. The result of the mission had previously been communicated, but none except the Envoy yet believed General Leeth a Tartar. Colonel Dressup, considering his mother tongue too immortal to record his victory, introduced a multitude of French words and phrases, which I feel bound to translate. In other respects, his despatch shall be faithfully given.

To the Honourable Jehoshaphat Guttlethorpe, Esquire, Chief of Surat, and Superintendent General of English Affairs in the Eastern Indies, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,—I have the honour to report, that, by the blessing of the Almighty, a signal and decisive victory has this day been gained by the troops of the Honourable Company under my orders, over the Mogul army, commanded by the perfidious renegade Jacob Benjamin Leeth.

Having timely notice through my intelligence department, after Captain Dalbracken's return to head-quarters, of the enemy's design to attack our camp in the disadvantageous position into which his shameful tergiversation had inveigled us, I determined to frustrate his measures without delay. Moving last night in accordance with this resolution, I directed Major Williams, my second in command, to surprise the fortified town of Hansgunje, which he, advancing with great bravery and skill, took possession of in a manner entirely to my satisfaction. Posting my reserve in this place under Captain Bethel, and leaving the baggage in it protected by the ditch and wall, I proceeded to draw up the remainder of the force along the banks of the river of Hansnulla, which runs parallel to the line of the enemy's encampment. His first division, consisting of the flower of his army, occupied the heights of Hanspoora, six hundred paces beyond the stream; and within point-blank range of that post. The main body of the Moguls, amounting to thirty thousand cavalry, twenty-four pieces of cannon, and twelve thousand infantry, lay under arms, waiting for daylight to move against us. Determining to make an attack instead of standing on the defensive, I gave the necessary instructions to the officers commanding brigades, and detaching Captain De Jungle with his irregulars to cover my flank and rear, as circumstances should indicate, I put myself at the head of the regulars under Major Williams, to assault the heights in person. Nothing can exceed the spirit, perseverance, and undaunted courage with which the officers and men performed this arduous service. Our column, advancing up the ascent which the enemy's position effectually commanded, in spite of every obstacle, closed with the far-famed Aligholes, or invincibles, of King Sawney's army, in a sanguinary charge, which soon proved the superiority of

disciplined valour. The enemy, in a manner worthy of their fate, disdained to flee or seek quarter. A sense of generosity to fall foes compels me to acknowledge, that they died as became soldiers on the spot which they had been ordered to defend.

Being now enabled to take a reconnoissance of Leeth's force, I perceived that his immense superiority in cavalry would render it unadvisable for us to occupy the ground we had taken. With a view of drawing part of his horse from the open plain within the range of our artillery and irregulars, I lost no time in falling back, and crossing the field diagonally from the heights to the jungle, which skirts the highway. This stratagem succeeding perfectly, led to the most glorious result. The rebels, on witnessing our success, had opened their battery, and begun to discharge rockets, which they sent severely on our ranks. The whole of their line was ordered out in pursuit, as they conceived, of our column. The admirable practice of Captain De Sylva, however, kept the main body of them in check, and finally repulsed the division directed by Leeth himself, whose elephant was shot under him. The rest of the Mogul cavalry, baffled in their attempt to follow the regulars farther than the verge of the jungle, pushed forward with great intrepidity, hoping, as I have reason to believe, that they might cut up our line on the river and the reserve, in detail, before it would be possible for them to act in co-operation. By an effort of daring impetuosity, this portion of the enemy forced the passage of the stream, notwithstanding the devoted gallantry of Captain De Jungle, who, occupying a well-chosen position in a bed of melons near the ford, kept up a heavy and destructive fire on the flank of the hostile cavalry. The design of the Moguls in this advance, was at once penetrated and defeated by the presence of mind and intrepidity of Captain Dalbracken, in command of our mounted brigades. This able officer, seeing that our adversaries, having passed the river, were ready to fall on his rear, immediately changed front, and repulsed them in a style which I cannot too highly commend. The ground, however, proving very unfavourable for the operations of cavalry, he could not pursue the force. Here I cannot omit to pay the tribute due to the truly martial spirit of a gentleman, not of the profession of arms, nor under my authority. I allude to Patrick Jiger, Esq., the High Commissioner, who, not satisfied with inspiring confidence by the example of one of his exalted rank, on the right of the line during the turn of the conflict, now crowned the triumph of the day, by joining Captain Dalbracken at the head of a party of picked men, for whom the room afforded him, in leading a charge on his war camel, which, bounding forward, exposed him to imminent danger. At this anxious moment, the first civil functionary was conspicuously seen by both armies, as he advanced and gave the shock to the enemy on his noble animal. Terror spread through the ranks of the rebels, who were thus driven back in disorderly masses, and compelled to pass under the exterminating fire of Captain De Jungle's irregulars. *Mr Jiger, carried too far by his chivalric spirit, was in the utmost*

peril, and had his camel shot under him, when fortunately he was rescued, and his valuable life saved by the personal valour of Captain Dalbracken and Mr Volunteer Kirkland.

The reserve now coming up, I moved my head quarters into the melon field to reinforce the party there, and thus completed the rout of the enemy, who fled, leaving the field of battle covered with his dead.

Though our loss has been very severe, evincing the formidable character of the contest, it will not appear great when the importance of the victory is considered.

(The remainder of this dispatch, after lamenting the fallen officers, is a sort of laudatory muster-roll, devoted to the general and particular praise of every person, regiment, or body of troops who could pretend to give any account of the action. The return of killed, wounded, and missing, contains 1 Major, 6 Captains, 11 Lieutenants, 8 Ensigns, and 1803 Native Officers and Sepoys, who, it might have been added, all suffered in the stratagem of drawing the Aligholes after them between the heights and the Jungle.)

I have the honour to be,

Sir, your most obedient humble Servant,

S. DRESSUP, Lieutenant-Colonel,

Commanding Field Army in Guzerat.

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JAMES.—That body Dressup and his Adjutant-General are assuredly both great liars. If you tell truth, the which I believe, the Colonel, after killing his enemies as rat-catchers destroy vermin in the trap, ran away with all his three thousand disciplined men before three hundred savages. De Jungle took to his heels likewise, but found a snug hiding-hole, from which he shot seventeen hundred horsemen whom he durst not face. Jiger and Mr Malcolm did not and never intended to smite the Moguls. Verily, there was no fighting at all, but much cold blooded murder. The man who calls this a victory hath surely a face of brass, and a heart like the nether millstone. Jock, methinks, you had better burn this dispatch to Mr Guttlethorpe, lest it deceive the people, and make your book a by-word as a book of lies. The Indies are, I fear, a wicked country.

BROWNIE.—James, James, you will continue "a simple old weaver" until your dying day. Like the French gentleman who had talked prose, you have been paying for glory, and worshipping it all your life without knowing what it is. It is essentially the same commodity, manufactured by the same sort of instruments, and in the same manner in the East and West. Dressup fights, and De Jungle writes, in exact conformity to the example of their prototypes in Europe. Every trade, you should be aware, has its secrets and technical terms. My narrative shews you the raw materials out of

which glory and the description of it are manufactured by heroes and their historians. Does the account of the battle of Hansgunje given by me, differ more from that given by Dressup and De Jungle, than the sheep's fleece differs from the web which you weave of its wool? You would think warriors very uncharitable if they called you a liar for saying that the product of your loom was *woollen*.

JAMES.—In verity, I knew not that men of war had a craft of such kind. Yet I marvel that they should gain battles, committing great slaughter without fighting, and even while fleeing from their enemies.

BROWNIE.—Your wonder arises from ignorance of the meaning of words: they retain the vulgar signification only when used of an enemy. Applied to himself and his own army by a general, what you object to, for instance, as no fighting, is an attainment of the desired result of a conflict without injury to the victors, which is always due to the martial wisdom of the commander. Fleeing again, followed by success, anyhow achieved, is a change of movement, retreat, or stratagem, which, like every other event preceding victory, is invariably foreseen and caused by the General. He has a prescriptive right in monopoly, of all that fortune, accidents, or subordinates do in accomplishing the great end which he and his employers seek. As we have many more battles to record, James, you must learn to understand them.

JAMES.—I fear me it will be hard to think well of men of war. Peradventure you speak in parable too of Mr Jiger's camel being "shot under him," though its buttock only was hurt by one of his own matchlock men.

BROWNIE.—Whoever saw a camel or any quadruped in a list o. wounded? Every one of them hit, is, by courtesy, shot under the rider. I have known the same charger thus shot three times, and as often paid for by the state.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

BUT, alas, how unstable are the glories of the earth! Had the messenger passed five minutes later than he did, this despatch, announcing victory, would have fallen into the hands of an unvanquished enemy. For Yacoob, pretending to gain a battle too, did not delay his march one instant. The narrow passage of the Nulla, however, being reported impracticable, he proceeded by a rout to the left, and turned the right of the English while Colonel Dressup was supervising the style of his adjutant General. Hansgunje was situated at the converging point of three roads, by some one of which the troops must go in returning to the territory of Surat. To each of these a division of the *Mogul army being allotted*, they presently took post in a semi-

rear of their opponents, at once cutting off the English perations, and actually encamping on the line of common. Neither succour nor supplies could possibly reach n their own countrymen : in front were the armies of people, behind an overwhelming force eager for vengeance they moved, the swords of the enemy threatened death, and famine would soon overtake them if they stood uares being yet unknown, Dressup, proceeding by rule, circle with his infantry, placing the artillery to right and the cavalry behind. Yacoob ben Leeth, astonished traordinary formation of a despised class of soldiers, rayers again and again, vainly asking everybody what done with infidels who assumed appearances never en in the East. Mike's cannon had also its share in he enemy at a respectful distance. But Dalbracken ridge felt acutely the taunts of their adversaries, who them of skulking under the protection of guns and t soldiers, sent daily invitations to try their fortune in plain.—“Shame! shame!” said they, “to kill brave could not resist you in that vile gorge; but you are who dare not meet us where we can use our arms.” le, affairs continued to look worse every day. Dressup compared to a porcupine arrested by the boa constrictor, ob to that huge serpent, apprehensive of inconvenience wing his prey, whilst the poor animal lies with erected xpecting its fate. The English commander, anticipating sity of surrendering, forgot his recent praise, and bey to blame his officers. At a council of war, now solemnly , he accused Dalbracken, almost in direct terms, of ging the negotiation, and during the action neglecting unity of destroying more of the enemy's cavalry, the in which Yacoob outnumbered them. To the accused egations were intolerable, and some altercation took strictly conformable to discipline. As Dressup kept ng the other's conduct, to which he mainly ascribed sent alarming predicament, the commandant of cavalry ged.—“Oppose me to an enemy, face to face, sir, and shew what I am. Give me leave now, for instance, the right division of the enemy, and if I can break ore they get reinforced, you may be enabled to extri-self from these increasing difficulties.” The colonel ispleased at what was undoubtedly good advice, replied ad no instructions to sacrifice valuable lives in such nts. Being admitted as a councillor at present, the nd in command ventured in his wrath to question the of his superior's past and projected measures, recurring oposal of acting on the offensive. “It is now too late,” disciplined Chief, “for you to compensate the errors I your commanding officer complain; you have now

right, sir, to think of my proceedings at all, and to pass an opinion upon them is mutiny. I desire you to be silent when reprimanded, and ready to die cheerfully whenever you are ordered."—"Colonel Dressup," rejoined the kindling Scot, "I will obey you in whatever obedience is consistent with honour, but I bear disgrace from no created being. *My life*, at least, is not *valuable* in your eyes; so allow me single handed to encounter the boldest of our enemies who holds the rank of a gentleman. Nay, do not marvel nor conceive the proposition absurd. The Saracens fought at tournaments, and it is said, staked the fate of armies on the prowess of an individual." Dressup, confounded by the haughty bearing of one whom he used to consider a mild, perhaps rather timid young man, and conscious of being wrong, therefore dreading an appeal to a court martial, was yet horrified to see insubordination, however provoked, and feeling an effort necessary, without knowing how to uphold his dignity, he went still deeper into error. "If I find cause, Captain Dalbracken," said he, sneering, "to hazard my army in such a manner, I shall appoint a champion in whose courage and conduct I place entire confidence."—"Well," rejoined the other, repressing indignation, "will you condescendingly permit me to maintain my own reputation, since I may not demand reparation from you, by challenging personally those who have so often challenged us in a body?" The stately commander rising up, made an assenting bow, and retired, convincing at that he himself could practise rigid discipline only when there was nothing to disturb his fixed habits. These at present were completely overturned, not certainly by the dread of personal danger, but because he could quote no rule nor precedent to justify the loss of an army, and answer to Mr Guttlethorpe for failing to realize his hopes of conquest and dominion. Having shared his laurels as long as they lasted most liberally with the rest, why, thought Dressup, should I not make them participate in my disgrace too?

Dalbracken, equipped for action, with all his friends unarmoured made a white flag of a loose turban fastened to the end of a pole, and proceeded at the head of the cavalcade to the different parties of the enemy. A Mussulman Fakeer, one of those religious beggars somewhat analogous to friars in the West having been long distinguished in the English camp for the strength of his lungs, was engaged to act as a herald on the occasion. Being a privileged character, he entered the hostile lines, bellowing at the full compass of his voice—*If the Commander of a thousand horse, his son, or any person of superior rank dared to fight a European gentleman hand to hand, here he was*. An attendant of the champion then waved the flag in ratification of the challenge. Though single combats seldom take place among the natives of India, at least of the higher classes, the spirit of them is quite intelligible to the people. The Fakeer

his employment, went jumping and roaring along, the Mogul officers to no purpose, though chiefs and issued from their tents to gaze at the Europeans; and frequently arose, after the repetitions of the challenge ring of the flag, "Wah! wah! The bold life-player!" The champion would enter the lists. When they had passed part of the encampment, Steelbow, fired by such an example, swore that he had a good mind to complete the shame black rascals who used to brag so, by offering to fight the son of them who could draw a sword. "Tell the priest there," said he, "to come back with me and bawl as before, that I am ready to meet the best man among them from Ben himself down to his link-boy."

In consequence all consented to return except Dalai, who, mortified to think that he might appear a vain-braggart who had foreseen the result of his bravade, sullenly to his tent. In the centre division of the enemy body of Maharattas, lately arrived from Sevajee, who had heard the invitation of the new challenger, than one of common trooper, mounted his horse and came forward. The parties were soon arranged. The Indian, however, obdurate to his opponent's having pistols in the holsters; but he satisfied with the explanation of better linguists than the English, that they were part of his accoutrements worn like ornaments and would not be used in the conflict. "No," added Steelbow, "I shan't touch them, upon my honour, unless you first do something unfair, which I don't suspect of you." The fellow who had inarticulate *click*, used to urge horses in the West, and gave negation in the East, continued composedly, "But as it will be satisfactory to my absent friends to see your head have slain you, there is no objection, I suppose, to my taking it off, and taking it home with me?"—"Faith, you are one, too; but hark ye, my boy, don't be selling the skin you have caught the lion!" So spoke Steelbow, unsheathing his sword. His friends now wisely made a motion, which was that all the spectators should send away their arms. Maharatta, a tall robust and daring man, now drew his sword, measuring Steelbow with keen eyes as they fronted each other in mutual preparation. Without moving perceptibly the Indian, which composed his bridle, the Indian, when the signal was given, pressing the horse's flank, made him bound like a tiger, and as suddenly turn off obliquely. The Englishman, giving his charger the spur to raise his mettle, endeavoured to guide him in the proper direction, but was unable to find that the reins had been cut by his adversary, were hanging loose in his hand. The spirited animal, now fully unmanageable, galloped off. The Maharatta, pushing lightly after him, paid no attention to Steelbow's cries of play!" "Hoo! hoo! Shouted the relentless pursuer, "I



have caught the lion, hulla! hulla! Death to the vile cow killer!" Continuing to utter similar exclamations at every turn, as he kept coursing the fugitive horse like a greyhound closing upon a hare. At last both came so nearly in contact, that the palpitating Europeans could no longer hope for their friend. Loud and menacing sounds had frequently reached their ears, and now they distinctly heard in English—"Stand off, or by the Lord"—with the report of a pistol to finish the sentence. The Maharatta, horse and man, came headlong to the ground.

The friends of the fallen combatant were disposed to lose no time in inflicting summary justice on those who had guaranteed his safety from fire-arms. But having parted with artificial implements of war, the barbarians little knew the natural defence of South Britons. Cambridge tripping his aggressor, dealt him, at the same instant, a terrible facer, which deranged his knowledge box and floored him. Bethel, grappling with another assailant, got his head into Chancery, and milled him at such a rate that he could not see to do further mischief. The Mogul gentlemen, after enjoying the sport, prevented more attacks, praising the victors for chastising the "black-faced plebeians" as their insolence deserved. The same authoritative persons approved of Steelbow's behaviour; since the Maharatta, having himself a chain bridle, first took an unfair advantage by cutting the other's leather reins, an act which he was justified in counteracting by shooting his adversary's horse. This, in fact, was found to be the amount of the day's slaughter,—the humbled warrior having only had his shoulder dislocated. Cambridge, to disclose another of his accomplishments, dispelled the hideous tumefaction of the joint, and restored the distorted limb to its place and functions, with a renown only inferior to the fame of his pugilism. After all these exploits, the members of the mess met quietly to dine at the usual hour. Dinner was scarcely over, when an officer entered, producing a written order from Dressup to put the whole party under arrest. They resigned their swords without hesitation, saw their own sentries withdrawn, and a double guard of regular infantry placed over the tent. None of those concerned in the Quixotic expedition at first doubted about their offence; but when the very hooka of Mike of the Wood ceased to bubble, and Jack of the Jungle ejaculated Eastern proverbs, like an afflated but unintelligible oracle, it was recollected that neither of them had been in the field. "It is dark under the lamp," said John de Jungle. "Did I, living in the water, make war on the crocodile?"—"Was I like the camel-bird, saying when commanded to take up my load, Lo! I am a fowl of the air: and when ordered to fly, answering Nay, I am a beast of burden?"—"No, it is just because I live with you, Colonel Dressup will court-martial me!" The hardened offenders making merry with the lamen-

tations of the superseded and ill-requited Adjutant-General, asked Michael if he had been guilty of mutiny too. "No," replied he.—"You will be tried for it, however."—"Yes."—"And shot or cashiered with the rest of us."—"Very well,"—which last response exhausted the artillery Captain's colloquial vocabulary, as with a grin, significant of his resolve to stand or fall with his comrades, he recommenced smoking.

Before daybreak next morning, their servants woke them in some alarm, affirming that the circle, so long used night and day as a safe-guard, was no more in its place. Not a sentinel remained at the tent. But their astonishment rose still higher when it appeared that the Commander of the Forces had actually left the camp at the head of all the regular infantry, without beat of drum. Amidst the confusion of tongues, a courier, recognised as the High Commissioner's, approached Dalbracken to deliver a message. "My Lord makes compliments to your Lordship, and begs you to pardon him for departing without taking leave." The man prepared to set off again, but was detained and subjected to a rigid cross-examination. "Where is Colonel Dressup?"—"In the Mogul camp."—"What is he doing there?"—"This slave knows nothing."—"Has he surrendered his arms—all the sepoy's guns, to the Moguls?"—"No, they are friends,—I think they have united."—"Where is Mr Jiger?"—"On the road to Surat."—"To Surat? how do you know? who saw him?"—"This slave saw my master go with these eyes."—"Tell us exactly how he went away."—"Protectors of the poor, it was so. My Lord tied up the new camel's tail with his own hand—made it kneel till he seated himself in the saddle—then pulling the string thus, he cried whish! whish! whish! putting the camel into a trot on the great road to the Gate of Mecca."

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**JAMES.**—Jock, my friend, I hope you do not forget to stick to the truth; if my memory misgives me not, I read in the newspapers of a fight in my own lifetime in the Indies, just like Captain Steelbow's with the Maharatta.

**BROWNIE.**—You allude to the exploit of an imitator, resembling Steelbow in nothing but bravery. He was an Irishman, I believe, who thought to improve on his original by shooting the rider instead of the horse.

**JAMES.**—Did that body Jiger ride a camel or a dromedary? and what for tied he up the tail of the beast, and cried whish! whish?

**BROWNIE.**—The Indian camel has but one hump. The tail is usually fastened to something, to prevent its sprinkling the

rider with a very unsavoury liquor. Whish ! corresponds to Click ! click ! that you use to horses.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

AURUNGZEB, with the exception of idol-breaking and the heavy imposts levied on the idolatry of rich Hindoos by himself, suffered little oppression in his own province. To stay the torrent of devastation, therefore, before it entered the confine of the Deccan, he resolved, out of humble respect to his august brother, to meet his Majesty within the territory of Guzerat Morad, maintaining his imperial state, received him as a subject. The throne, canopy, and street of nobles, were all arranged with pompous precision as Aurungzeb approached to present his offering of homage. The spectacle was imposing ; and when he considered the high name of the stripling in war, the dissembler almost took the phantom of his own creation for a reality. After being graciously received, and appropriately honoured, he was permitted to retire. A message at the same time required his attendance in a private tent where the brothers had a less formal interview.—“Aurungzeb you are an excellent devout person,” said Morad ; “Meer Khar has told us all about your affection for us, but we had not time to read your long letter. We want to know how you are to be rewarded for serving us.”—“Your Majesty,” replied the other, “does too much honour to a brother like me, whose sole aim is to have the glory of God upheld by one, on the throne of our ancestors, so similar in character to the great Timur himself.”—“It is well : you then distinctly acknowledge us the fittest of the family to reign ?”—“Assuredly, sire ; Suja is an avowed heretic, and Dara notoriously a thorough Infidel.”—“We have heard so. But, Aurungzeb, it is said that you have got just what both of them want ; now what do you expect for lending us so many virtues ? Speak out, man.”—“My kingdom, sire, is in the gardens of Paradise. Mine eyes are lifted from the earth, where all I desire are the cell and the raiment of the Dervise.”—“Nonsense ! Why spend a year or two in hard fighting for us to get only that which every idle rogue, taking God’s name, has already ?”—“It is known that should your Majesty’s bounty permit, the wish of my soul is to go in pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Mecca, and thereafter dwell on the sacred soil of the Prophet.”—“You took plunder enough at Golconda to support a thousand saints all their days at Mecca ; how came it that you did not depart then ?”—“The money captured in king Kootub’s dominions is mostly expended, and the remainder is destined to pay the warriors who are ready to as-

sist in enthroning him worthy of his race in the city of inherited empire. To my sovereign alone must I then be indebted for the means of sojourning abroad as becomes his brother, who, though humbled to a devotee, wishes still to maintain his rank in the bestowal of alms and charity."—"Ha! that now is intelligible. We will give you a crore of rupees on taking possession of the Delhi treasury. What more?"—"Most munificent and benevolent Emperor, thy servant's eye-lids sweep the dust in the obeisance of gratitude."—"Aurungzeb, that sanctimonious look of yours has forced us to think again about your expectations. It is true all the world calls us a handsome, generous fellow, and you a plain-looking, cautious gentleman, whose thievish way of taking towns does not set people a singing, like our victories."—"Ah, my liege! where is the comparison?"—"Well, but the wonder is how you become so suddenly convinced of the truth. We knew ourselves to be the ablest of the family long before others perceived it. Dara and Suja are yet incredulous; and it is possible that Aurungzeb may think his sanctity a match for our valour, after all."—"Your Majesty mocks the poor pretensions of this subject to earthly esteem."—"Your godly men are always mysterious, but their ways cannot escape our penetration. We know how to make sure of a walking mosque. You must swear, Aurungzeb!"

This was a demand which had not been considered as at all probable, and it made the Lord of the Deccan look somewhat confused.—"Hand me that gilt Koran in your belt,—kneel down with your face to the West,—recollect Mecca lies there!" Aurungzeb obeyed, putting the sacred book on his head, and taking an oath of terrific solemnity, asseverating his unalterable allegiance to Morad, and imprecating endless perdition on his soul if ever he deviated from his engagements, to support Akbar the Second. "It is well!" said Morad, "but we forgot one thing. Have you not a son? What is his name?"—"Mahommed," answered the father in a subdued tone.—"Now remain as you are,—put your right hand on Mahommed's head, and repeat the adjuration." It was done, in accents of such deep and emphatic sincerity, that the reckless but generous youth really felt sorry for having doubted the faithful intentions of his brother. The fraternal confidence which ensued, proved fatal to the future influence of the honest old Eunuch, who prompted Morad's part in the last scene.

His Majesty next passed abruptly to the subject of their great enterprise, proposing to attack the heir apparent without delay. The pious Prince had many cogent objections to the measure, which he did not urge at present. But knowing perfectly the condition of the Guzerat army, and the active means by which, as his brother assured him, their excellent friend Tutty was replenishing the treasury, he strove anxiously to make Morad temporize until he could acquire a sufficient sum of money, and

not take the field whilst their opponent was so efficiently prepared. His Majesty, however, despised caution, and got enraged at the stress laid upon money, so essential in the system of bribery, on which his holy ally depended chiefly. "We shall have abundance of cash by-and-by," said he, "but confound all your schemes for preventing fair fighting! Why, you might as well offer us a dead tiger, to save the trouble of hunting him, as a throne not won by victory!"—"Your Majesty's fiery valour almost strikes terror into your friends," replied Aurungzeb, proceeding by flattery and artifice until he got his consent to call out the whole of his troops under Meer Khan and Yacoob ben Leeth, directing those officers to drive back Jeswunt Sing, should he invade the province, and chastise the English force, as they came along to join the Emperor. By thus representing the attack on Guzerat as of no importance, he kept its warlike ruler at a distance from the scene of action, in order eventually to lay the blame of opposing the allies of Shah Jehan on the Lieutenants, and to reserve both king Akbar and himself for more effective rebellion. He saw clearly at present that nothing but Morad's recantation of his folly and his own sturdy denial of concurrence in the offensive measures, could preserve either of their provinces, or leave them the prospect of crushing Dara at some future period. His great want at this threatening crisis was an agent, rogue enough to enter into the spirit of his designs, who should yet be honest to his employer, and possessed of talents to counteract the vigilance and address of the Princess Jehanara at Delhi. Events of an aspect most unpromising at first, supplied him with such a person, who, under prosperous circumstances, would have been otherwise engaged.

But the immediate object of Aurungzeb's policy was to dissolve the alliance which had been formed to put down the rebellion in Guzerat. Although the army sent to the field by the English merchants was spoken of with great contempt, yet the Governor of the Deccan taught by Meer Khan to think the officers warlike, did not feel certain of their hostility proving quite harmless, because the common soldiers under them were natives of India. Having held communication with Guttlethorpe, who in his case was not imposed on by a sham envoy, he had pretty accurately gauged the political capacity of the chief Factor.

Yacoob ben Leeth lost no time in reporting what he called his victory at Hansgunje, and his dispatch was very satisfactory to Akbar the Second. His brother, however, knowing the truth very soon after the battle, dreaded the issue of another encounter, and resolved to attempt the prevention of it in his favourite way. Yacoob in consequence received a private message, by no means unwelcome, to avoid an engagement, and not to attack the enemy until further instructed. In reverting to affairs at *Surat*, it is proper to premise that Mr Guttlethorpe, as becomes

a statesman vigilant of the public weal, entertained, in those eventful times, some hundreds of couriers, whose duty it was to obtain useful information by every possible means. The Chief, paying them liberally for ordinary services, and giving additional rewards for every communication of great public importance, is not to be blamed, if these persons were, notwithstanding, remiss and fraudulent. But without, in the slightest degree, reflecting on the highly honoured gentlemen who perform the same functions in this country, during the present peaceful days (1821), I may be allowed to state that the spies of Surat, where the calling is held in less esteem, instead of dispersing far and wide over the country in quest of intelligence, used to assemble just outside of the town, amusing one another by inventing stories to satisfy the expectations of their master. Seven of these men having gone one day to the distance of nearly five miles, to guard against interruption, seated themselves in the bed of a ravine, comfortably shaded from the sun by its high bank, and began to play industriously at the game called Twenty-five. Three of them, soon losing the cheatings of many months, threw themselves on the ground, cursing their fate,—impeaching the justice of heaven—and vowing desperate deeds to retrieve fortune, or perish. At this juncture these resolute characters were almost frightened out of their senses by the shadow of a running camel on the opposite side of their retreat. They perceived the rider to be an official messenger of some great man, a person likely to carry fire-arms which he might use agreeably to his good pleasure. Down he came, however, among the gambling couriers, with an air of perfect confidence, carrying no visible weapon even for defence. It seemed a meeting of ceremonious noblemen which followed. "My princes," said he, "can this poor traveller have a pipe from any gentleman of his caste? Hey, ho! I am tired to death." They begged to know how far his Lordship had come. "From his Majesty's camp." All the seven now approached the messenger, demanding somewhat less respectfully, what king he served. "Not I, my Lords," cried he in trepidation,— "I serve not Shah Jehan, nor Prince Dara; I am the humble slave of your own Emperor, Akbar the Second—may his Majesty live!" The whole gang darting instantly upon him, tore the clothes off his back, and when they found leisure to rummage, after dividing his money and ornaments, they discovered an embroidered bag in his girdle, containing a letter which bore the seal of Aurungzeb. In the course of an hour this momentous document, the first genuine dispatch intercepted by his people, was in the hands of Mr Guttlethorpe's Persian secretary or Moonshee, who, closetted with his palpitating master, expounded the fearful contents. As these were pregnant with important results, I think it my duty to give a faithful translation of the letter. To the envelope, resembling a purse

in shape, was appended the impression of a large seal on wax, the paper exhibiting in the following form, the mark of the Signet in ink, and under it the solemn hoax :—

THE FAITHFUL SUBJECT  
OF THE EMPEROR AKBAR,  
THE KING DESCENDED  
PRINCE AURUNGZEB.

To Darr Beg Khan (meaning Dalbracken) the respectable servant of the State.

"The dutiful address of that devoted servant has passed under review and given delight to the presence. You acquaint us that the holy ceremony of circumcision having been performed, the abominations of the Christians abjured, and other becoming observances followed, you are now made pure, and become a child of the true faith. It is known. You further crave to repeat the humble petition formerly submitted to us, that believing in the unbegotten Deity and his Prophet (to whom be everlasting peace!) you may at last be taken into the service of the State, together with the Christian officers Cam Boorj, Beetul, Useel Bow, Dye Jungul, Dye Sulwah, and many others who have covenanted to bring over fifteen thousand men. It is understood and approved. You, lastly, intreat permission to exterminate the infidel commander Daree Sub, the Pedlar Jee Ghur, and others, disaffected to his Majesty of glorious renown. In a more particular manner still, you beseech us to let you afterwards sack the English factory at Surat, hang Cutwal Toraub, the head huckster, whom you propose to embowel while gibbeted on his own presumptuous flag staff, taking the daughter of that unbeliever into your Haram, as a concubine won in battle. Your humble request has been heard, and is fully granted in all things. See that you tarry not, but proceed quickly in the good work! What more?" Mr Guttlethorpe's excessive joy on receiving Dressup's dispatch after the battle had already been woefully depressed by subsequent accounts of his hopeless predicament. This epistle, however, when translated into Hindostanee, disclosed at one view to his mind utter ruin to the Factory, and danger, of the most appalling nature, impending over himself and his family. Not being able to read Persian, or to comprehend more than a few of the most common words, he made the secretary repeat the translation again and again.—"Oh Lord! Lord! what am I to do? The man recommended by the President too—Dalbracken—a horrible traitor!—a Mussulman!—embowelled—concubine—gracious heaven! What more, indeed?" Then starting up, he ran to the house of the Commandant like one pursued by a mad dog.—"My dear Batta, get ready—do your best—have the guns loaded to the muzzle with grape—the arch traitor will not tarry, I dare say." Shocked at the want of

sympathy which Colonel Batta and the rest of his friends manifested, he rushed into the Ranee's apartments, where he found their daughter likewise. The old lady looked provokingly cool, replying, by interrogation, in her ordinary manner and tone: "Who knows whether it be truth or a lie?" Poor Guttlethorpe, holding up the letter, which he considered irrefragable proof, stood agape at the indifference which the answer betokened, in an attitude of such ludicrous discomposure, that Eurasia, clasping her mother's neck for support, giggled loud and long to the dismay and horror of her father, divulging treachery still more revolting to his startled imagination.—"Base and shameless girl," screamed he in agony, "how thy black blood punishes me for begetting thee! Oh that Jehoshaphat Guttlethorpe's own child should consent to have her parent gutted on the gallows, and to become a villain's mistress! But I saw you liked him from the first—I saw you liked him! And you, woman! is this my reward for saving you from being burned alive? But what better could I expect—all your vile race of Hindoos are alike—every one of them treacherous and ready to murder their best friends! Where shall I be in security to think of the public interests?" Recollecting, in a lucid moment of this distraction, that Admiral Webfoot was an unlikely person to be seduced by Dalbracken, he bolted out of the house and threw himself into a boat, followed by his daughter, now weeping abundantly. He ordered the men to row with their utmost exertion, and soon found protection in the worthy seaman's ship.

His first request was to put the whole fleet in requisition, to transport the treasure and property of the Honourable Company to Calicut. The Admiral, however, having by this time realized a handsome fortune, and determined to make a princely one, by impartially plundering friend and foe, had a thousand nautical objections quite insurmountable, of which no landsman could possibly judge.

In a few hours after the Chief's embarkation, a sailor announced from the mast head the approach of a boat, apparently from Surat. "He is coming!" cried Mr Guttlethorpe; "My dear sir, prepare, turn out the crew.—I will stand to one of the guns myself, and Eurasia, my dear, go below, and hand up the cartridges." From the appearance of the party, his friend anticipated booty worth ten or twelve thousand rupees, and lost no time in making preparations to board, and as usual rob the passengers, whoever they might be. But to the utter disappointment of the Admiral, who expectorated much marine satire, and to the unutterable joy of the Chief, it was his ancient acquaintance the Euvoy of Aurungzeb, come on a mission from Akbar the Second. Mr Guttlethorpe, rubbing his hands and grinning with delight, now resumed his natural aspect. "Eh! how lucky to hit the middle course after all! Had I stayed at the Factory, or been off to Calicut, we should have gone quite



wrong; but here I am in Swally roads, the best place in the world for a negotiation. *Thou shalt go safest in the middle* the wise Ovid, and so say I; come to it, King Sawney!" & his ally, the Governor of Surat Castle, step on deck in the Ambassador's train, the happiness of the Chief was consummated. Peace and security were certain, and it remained for him to learn the terms on which they were granted. Here it may be mentioned that the Governor, who previously professed adherence to the rebels, the Envoy arrived the day before in the fort, to execute his master's will, where he could receive speedy and accurate intelligence of the seizure, and subsequent effects of the letter. The experienced diplomatist rebuked, at first, rather haughtily, his old friend so disloyally sending an army to disturb the peace of Majesty's dominions, introducing a handsome compliment to those officers, whose sense of duty had led them to join the standard of Akbar the Second. But adverting to the meek disposition of his august master, he had it in command, he was happy to add, to offer the English forgiveness and oblivion for past misconduct, on the recal of Colonel Dressup, with the loss of the troops, still acknowledging his authority and the payment of five lacs of rupees in ready money. Mr Guttlethorpe, so full lest the avowal of his arresting an imperial messenger should interrupt the existing harmony, was painfully silent on the subject, as he felt exceedingly anxious to ask whether the document had been sent to the traitor in duplicate. "Jigger and Dressup!" ejaculated he inwardly, "God protect the State! No maxim in politics ever yet reduced to practice, requires statesmen to save public money at the expense of public safety. Yet the Chief of Surat, after much debate, succeeded in concluding a treaty of twenty one articles, establishing perpetual peace and amity between the high contracting parties, and stipulating for the payment of three lacs only by the English. This abatement was mainly effected by an article of a very interesting nature, though it did not seem expedient to record it on paper or parchment. In relinquishing his master's just claim to so much money, the Mussulman perceived no sufficient reason for leaving it in the coffer of the company, but hinted very intelligibly, that a lak a piece might be well bestowed on negociators who had rendered such important services to their respective employers. Guttlethorpe, receiving the amount one half, affected to concur, and paid the debt, but never drew his own share from the public treasury.

The Admiral, satisfied on knowing that war still continued, fired a salute when the embassy departed, resolving to contrive a piracy for the future, in the name of King Sawney, instead of Shah Jehan or Willy-a-head. Dispatches announcing the restoration of peace, were instantly forwarded to Yacoub Leeth and his rival Dressup. Mr Guttlethorpe's story read

the English camp just after the altercation at the council of war, the colonel found in the intelligence a thorough explanation of Dalbracken's insubordinate behaviour, and of the tacit support which he seemed to receive from his messmates. Those vigorous measures already noticed, were adopted to prevent such atrocious characters from attempting the extermination of himself and his friends; nothing but respect for his new ally deterring him from visiting the delinquents with the penalties of martial law.

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## CHAPTER XV.

THOUGH now entered on the stage of glorious war, the young Laird of Dalbracken remained still the same imaginative and sensitive being who dreamed and loved in the scenes of his boyhood. His aspirations and passions had, indeed, found widely different objects. The recovery of his forefathers' lands, and the possession of his first loved Clara, ever cherished when remembered, seldom recurred to his mind after he arrived in India. It is proper, at this period of his history, to account for a change apparently extraordinary. The erotic spirit, or I may say more indigenously, the loving temperament, could never lie dormant in either his head or heart. The lectures of the old Laird, which the son was too respectful to criticise, having early dissociated marriage and poverty, had connected it inseparably with splendour. One, who at the same time panted for that grandeur which none but the great in soul can acquire, and idolized woman, could not escape being absolutely enchanted by the prospect which opened to his imagination in the East.

Conversing with various natives of Delhi, introduced to him by their townsman, Bahadur Ally, he took, from the first, a lively interest in whatever related to the Princess Jehanara, from their uniform attestation of her matchless attractions. Supposing the royal sisters at liberty to choose their own husbands, the lists seemed prepared in which the young and brave were to contend, in rivalry of fame, for princely dignity and imperial beauty! Could he act a distinguished part in maintaining the rights of Dara, so as to appear at last elevated by military renown in the court of a grateful Emperor, amongst his most favoured nobles, he saw nothing impossible in his becoming a Viceroy, and the chosen of Jehanara. This vision, which shone so vividly in the recess of his own mind, like many others, was never disclosed to the most intimate of his friends. It would have startled even Bethel, whom he trusted most, and have appeared eminently ridiculous to Cambridge.

My reasons for discovering the truth, are to disprove the imputation of Dalbracken's taking the course which he pursued from a

deep design to please Sir Josiah Child, at the expense of his hospitable friend, Mr Guttlethorpe, whom certain speculative historians, in quest of motives, suppose him to have been desirous of supplanting in the chiefship of Surat.

The unseen object of this ambitious love had at the present crisis a most difficult part to perform. The strength and immediate designs of the conspirators being very imperfectly known, the minds of her party were now held in dismal suspense at the distant court of Delhi. The priests and many of the powerful nobles kept anxiously on the watch for an opportunity to subvert the interests of the heir to the Mogul throne. For enabling them to effect this purpose, they desired nothing so much as want of success, however undeserved, in his first efforts to put down the rebels. That superstitious feeling existing every where, which always prophesies in favour of the fortunate and against the unfortunate, is doubly strong among people who think a man's career predestined. Nor is the force of opinion less manifest in the combatants themselves than in their employers. Hence the chance of victory generally increases in geometrical progression after gaining the first battle. This active and subtle faction knowing the practical truth, were aware that could Shah Jehan be persuaded to believe his favourite son foredoomed to ruin, he would seek to avert it by setting him aside from the succession, with the peculiar inconsistency of all professors of the creed, who act as if they expected to contravene the decrees of Providence. Since no tangible document or overt act had convicted Aurungzeb of participating in the rebellion which he caused in reality, the Princess Roshenara artfully represented him as associating with Morad to restore the youth to allegiance and filial duty. His influence, she alleged, would readily obtain so desirable an object, without throwing the empire into confusion, did not the unjustifiable violence of Dara drive the fiery young man to extremity, by leaguings with Infidels to invade his province, which seemed only a pretext for beginning the destruction of him and all his brothers. In proof of altered sentiments and contrition, it was observed that the Viceroy of Guzerat forbore, out of respect, to oppose the nominal armies of the Emperor in person. "But," added her Highness, "the King of Kings will permit his unhappy first born to proceed, until it shall appear to all men that he possesses the confidence of none but a doating parent, not even the attachment of the unbelievers whom he has arrayed against the faithful." The Princess predicted very confidently on this occasion, from having just received a secret express announcing the desertion of part of the English, and the probable neutrality of the Rajpoots. Her prophetic observation produced the intended effect some days afterwards, when the news arrived from Dara himself. The poor old Monarch was dreadfully perplexed what to do for the safety of his race and progeny. His hopes in the heir apparent were almost extinguished. But still the commanding mind of Jehanara prevailed against Aurungzeb, whose cunning and deceitful conduct towards the Eng-

lish, and another fact came to light, his tampering with the sooth-sayers of Jeswunt Sing, when depicted by her in unfavourable colours, threw strong suspicion on the sincerity of all who advocated his procedure.

The aspect of affairs being now such that Dara's cause must triumph or sink irretrievably in opinion, the two Princesses and their partisans looked to Guzerat with intense anxiety.

Anrunzzeb, in whose mind no comprehensive scheme ever originated, thinking the safety of Guzerat insured by the success of his trick upon Guttlethorpe, now saw that he had a good chance of completing the prejudice in favour of his own fortune, and against Dara's, by the destruction of the deserted portion of the English army. The accomplishment of this object certainly did not appear difficult. The Rajpoots, from whatever cause, still continued in the vicinity of Oudypore; and Meer Khan, the deputy-governor, no longer kept in check by the expected irruption of the Maharana, was ready to take the field against the only threatening enemy. Yacob ben Leeth remained in the rear, and all the petty princes in the interest of the rebel brothers were sent forth to expedite the annihilation of a handful of undisciplined troops, under young inexperienced officers, who could know nothing of the art of war.

The conduct of these leaders, indeed, exceedingly resembled infatuation, in a predicament of such peril. The unanimity of Europeans and natives, however, in resolving to make a campaign, could not be surpassed. The only subject of dissension was which side they should take. The warlike name of Morad possessed powerful attraction for most of them. Dalbracken, however, after gaining over his own circle of friends, exerted himself with an earnestness, enthusiasm, and consequent eloquence, for Dara, which, though they marvelled at his unaccountable zeal, finally overcame all opposition. He instantly wrote to that Prince, relating what he knew of the extraordinary circumstances under which they had been abandoned by their countrymen: and proposing to continue the march on Ahmedabad, in co-operation with such other force as his Highness should deem sufficient. This important business being precipitately settled during the day, the members of the mess sat gaily down to dinner, as if nothing particular had occurred. Captain Steelbow, having filled his belly, as wont, became loquacious. "A toast, gentlemen, I have a d—d good toast to give: since he is fairly off, here's to our noble Commander that was, and may he never command us again."—"Well," said Cambridge, "since toasts are the order of the day, I will give one too, provided you fill bumpers, and drink it standing—General Dalbracken, Commander-in Chief of the army!" Acclamations followed, by which all present ratified the title. The elected Chief returned thanks for the honour, in a suitable speech, which might be taken for jest or earnest, according to the subsequent humour of the parties. Meanwhile, he thought proper to pass the joke. "Gentlemen," said he, "I rise to propose another toast, for which I expect approbation, although I mean to



*menian*. Some discussion took place in naming the fourth, its commander rejecting the appellation of *Beaverian* as too unclassical. It was therefore denominated *Pileun*.

Preparations for war being thus made, in a style becoming players at high jinks, the army marched off in the diagonal line between Oudypore and Ahmedabad. Jeswunt Sing was still expected to join them. But he remained immovable: and the Europeans, after proceeding a long way on a fruitless journey, found themselves unsupported, and likely to be attacked before any troops could possibly succour them from Dara's head quarters. Their treasure being somewhat scanty, or to state the plain truth, they had none, as they, like many bankers who flourish on credit, were upheld by the hope of plunder. Their capital was yet in the enemy's coffers. A serious accident of still more immediate consequence befel part of their gunpowder, which a heavy and unexpected fall of rain greatly damaged. In deliberating on the ways and means of supplying such material wants, the Adjutant-General suggested a change of route, which the Generals, guided by his information, immediately took. Baroach, said he, is the great depository of gunpowder, which the former governor kept separate from other military stores, and at a distance from the capital, an arrangement that the Prince has continued. The fort is on this side of the Narbudda, and so weakly garrisoned, that a few shots will make it surrender. Not expecting to find a place of importance altogether destitute of money, they resolved to capture it without delay. No force, said the head of the intelligence department, could interrupt their progress, if the army made one long forced march at the very commencement, to throw out Yacoob ben Leeth, who, though sufficiently remote, kept watching their movements. They beat the General, that is to say, the signal for marching, before day-break, and reached the spot destined for their encampment after sunset, with weary limbs, jaded horses, and toil-worn servants. The Podalirian Legion, forming the rear-guard, did not arrive that night, as will shortly appear.

Being a sort of guardian spirit of honest rusticity, I like to tell a story with all its accompaniments, instead of abstracting the principal event, after the fashion of some philosophical historians, who substitute their opinion of what is worth knowing for actual occurrences. There are chemists of the same class, who dare to carry their condensing apparatus into the kitchen. But where is the ploughman whose stomach prefers their mess of gluten, to a shoulder of mutton, though it be demonstratively proved by the wise, that a spoonful of the one contains as much of the nutritious principle as a pound of the other!—Away with such delusions! Bulk and quantity deserve attention not less than quality, a fact practically known to the sellers as well as the readers of books, and recognised in the gravest professions.

Having thus candidly avowed my opinion on the subject, I proceeded to mention exactly what happened amongst these wild adventurers, in the bivouac, where they were doomed to pass the

night. No tents, no beds, no eatables, were the dreary answers to all enquiries, on such interesting topics. Steelbow, wont to be the terror of tardy cooks, bore the privation with patience and resignation quite exemplary. Not saying much, where eloquence itself were vain, he was drawing from his companions, as he hinted, to sleep in the his legion, but turned back on hearing Dalbracken suddenly select one source of comfort. "Thank heaven!" cried he, "he running camel, with three or four bottles of Madeira bel saddle." The screw had begun to enter the cork, when he reappearing, called out, while untying his sash, to delay ration, and presently produced a huge bacon ham, which he lashed to his back, under the outer garment. The satisfaction this late discovery suppressed any enquiry as to the destination of the article, though most of the parties concerned the announcement of the wine and the surrender of to stand in the relation of cause and effect. Be that as it fortunate carrier of hog's-flesh divided his attention impartially between them, when the proper time arrived for opening the Having helped themselves to some dry bushes of the Indian risk, which had been grubbed up by the roots to enclose a labouring field, and added a few cakes of cow-dung, found the village, whose experienced inhabitants prudently abandoned the brave, they made a fire sufficient for preparing their meal was eaten under a peepul tree, which naturalists have taken to call the *religious fig*.

Dalbracken and Bethel having spread their cloaks on the ground and made pillows of their saddles, retired to seek rest, but did not immediately find.

The other two, in that state of excitement which often succeeds on extreme fatigue, and gladdened by the repast, remained in the embers, in earnest colloquy, long after Mike had gone amidst his engines of death. This discourse proved so interesting to the recumbent generals, that neither of them could close. A half-filled belly and a quart of Madeira, on this occasion the Chief of the Torn Beaver an air of maudlin seriousness truly comic. Though the soldier's education had been rather or rather omitted, he felt great inward respect for learn-

ar mare? He treated me in a most ungentlemanlike way, asked how the animal got in such fine condition without any sort: what think you he had the impudence to say? My scoundrel told me that he fed her on *sheeps' heads*!—My friend, thought I, you have mistaken your man if you bamboozle me: I know horses and mares too, better than such a humbug as to believe they pick *sheeps' heads* hungry Scotchman; so I made the tent-pitcher give him a—"Well, I say that the horse-seller made no fault; none of his country's people and Cutch's, likewise, boil the flesh of heads until it becomes jelly, and then horses eat them very on once gave plenty of abuse also to Mr Guttlethorpe's when he recommended you to look in trees for partridges ducks."—"Hum! you take their word for everything, le; they impose upon you, I am almost sure of it. If I them without proof of their rascality, would not they desert service? You see how cursedly soft the General is with his and what a pack of blackguards they are! The Doctor obliged to change his fellows every day!"—"Yes, that is it is because the General and Lieutenant-General both never any of their attendants. General Bethel looks at what they, hourly, not getting angry, and makes preclusion of their inours."—"Misdemeanours? ah, that indeed would be some-peak of: preclusion of misdemeanours! Yes, yes, when that rly about, as one may say, we shall smell roast beef, and peas pudding, in decent towns over the country, besides com-ellars to refresh an army, instead of finding empty huts and ut that nasty fuel to reward brave men on a march like this. uth is, John, their religion is a damned bad one, and no better in your Kababs, Pilaos, Ludoos, and trash, will be found kitchens until they become good Christians. By-the-by, e, there is an ugly story in the camp that, as a friend, I'll opportunity of telling you of. Your subaltern, that sly, terloper, says you prayed in Arabic, or some gibberish of calling 'Allah!' as if you were a pagan Mahomedan, lon-field."—"But I pray, like a Christian, in English, as prayed, no doubt, and am I not inheritor of my mother's o? So I petition Allah in the Prophet's language. Both very good, and I have two chances of going to Heaven." ment seemed puzzling, but highly deserving of refutation; bow, after comparing his friend's case to that of neutrals in war, whom both parties fleeced as enemies, continued in st mood:—"Oh! John, it is the devil and all to be with-true religion. Your orthodoxy and heterodoxy cannot r the same banner. I recommend you to get your dis-m Mahommed immediately; for I look on him as just her prophet as old Noll is a king,—and he, the son of—more deserves to be called 'your Majesty,' than Myneer ler."—"Orthodoxy and heterodoxy are too badly defined



in my dictionary. What are they derived from?"—"Let me see; *defined, derived*, say you?"—"Yes, I mean, what other two or three words join in making them one."—"Why, ortho- and hetero-, you know them, of course, and then you have just to clap on doxy, which makes the thing complete, don't you see?"—"Doxy! Doxy means a bad woman."—"Well," rejoined Steelbow, with the eagerness of a dull person grasping at a bright idea, "damn my button, man, don't you know that Bishops, as well as Roundheads, call the Pope's religion a Scarlet Whore?"

The two listeners, who, lying within arm's length, had been nodding each other during the foregoing conversation, unable longer to restrain their mirth, let it explode at this learned analysis, to the confusion of the philologist. They kept unmercifully repeating all the remarks most worthy of remembrance, which they had overheard. Steelbow tried to grunt in chorus, but there was nothing of gladness in the sound. Of a sudden, however, he became very serious, calling out "hush, for God's sake!" and laying his ear to the ground. This appeared a knowing stratagem of the old soldier to change the subject by creating a false alarm. An obscure and indefinite noise was audible to the sense, or, it might be, the fancy, of the rest, when thus aroused. It resembled the rustling of a distant wood in a calm night, and being imputed to wind on the leaves of the peepul tree, they continued their banter, sarcastically commending Steelbow's generalship.—"May I never handle knife and fork again," said he, "if three or four thousand horse are not marching on the left of the line." The tramp of cavalry, shortly after, became distinct to the most sceptical: and all hopes of its being the van of the Podalirians vanished, when the first picket was driven in, and the report of matchlocks spread rout and uproar throughout the camp. As the Pretorians and Flamenians lay in line contiguously, Dalbracken ran instantly among his own foot, to get them if possible under arms. Except those on duty, the majority were still fast asleep. Meanwhile, bands of the assailing enemy penetrated within twenty paces of the late head quarters. Wherever fires appeared, round which Indian soldiers are wont to sleep in groupes, the assailants were seen poking with long spears, starting some from slumber, chasing and stabbing others, as their humour dictated. The absence of the baggage proved naturally a great disappointment to the visitors. "Where is his sister's naughtiness, your Commander?"—"Shew us their granny's naughtinesses the Christians!"—"And the treasure chest, where is it?"—"No treasure?"—"Thy daughter's disgrace! take us to the Cow-killers, or I will thrust thee through." The leader of the gang, who uttered this last threat, was in full preparation to execute it, when one of the English Sepoys, holding up his Braminical badge,—"The Cow, my Princes, the Cow!" cried he, thereby claiming the privilege of a tribe whose blood no Hindoo may shed. But had the petitioner not made himself useful, his birthright might have been an indifferent shield against the overhanging weapon. "Why

do you serve unclean beasts, good gentleman? but come along to the ox-eaters' hiding hole."

Dalbracken found his heroes more disposed to lie still with sheets covering their heads, and trust for safety to Providence, than stand to their arms. But by commanding, exhorting, and kicking, he finally got about two hundred in a condition to act. After all his exertions, however, the darkness of the night, which precluded the possibility of distinguishing friend and foe, deterred him from attempting anything until daylight should appear. Yet the disgusting butchery that was going on everywhere around him, amongst men whom he ought to protect at the hazard of life, rendered delay intolerably distressing. The party conducted by the Bramin, now came up to the bivouac, uttering much filthy abuse when they saw it apparently deserted. Scattering over the spot, stooping down to the horses' necks, to see better, and raking the ground and embers of the fire with their spears, they turned their backs to the tree behind which the Europeans had retired. Steelbow, cautiously kneeling, reconnoitred the enemy's position as they sat in the dim star-light above him. With his sword already unsheathed, and a noiseless step, he stalked between two of them, and before their spears could be brought to bear upon him, he knocked both lifeless from the saddles. This appalling onset, only perceived in its effects like the springing of a mine, struck terror into the rest, who galloped away. But the most important consequence was produced by the flight of the two horses thus deprived of riders. Rushing through the camp, these animals retraced their steps at full speed. Contagious terror pervaded the straggling plunderers, and, when the discomfited party, retreating from the tree, were heard in retrogression also, fugitives burst from all quarters to follow in the same route. The Surat levies, who shewed as little inclination as power to defend their camp, were now, contrary to all rules and regulations, overflowing with martial ardour. They began to shout and fire. During the remainder of the night, defying the authority of their officers, they blazed away, like an eruption of Vesuvius, long after the total disappearance of the enemy. The loss of the latter amounted to two men killed, by him of the Torn Beaver, and five prisoners, whose horses had stumbled and thrown them in the flight. These declared that their whole host belonged to Maharaja Sevajee, in whose name another impostor had made an alliance with Mr Guttlethorpe. As it seemed probable that an army, whose main object was pillage, would yet proceed in quest of the baggage, Dalbracken instantly sent off an express to the commander of the rear division to put him on his guard. Cambridge heard in good time of the Maharattas, who, on finding themselves not pursued, halting at the distance of five miles, in a corn-field, which offered provender for their horses, pressed a few villagers to keep watch on the side next the English camp, and went to sleep. Each of these warriors took the blankets which formed part of his saddle, laying one beneath, with another, or perhaps only a dirty sheet

above him, and slept on the ground without dreaming of death. His charger, restrained or not according to the animal's disposition by having two feet tied together, or bound to a spear that stuck in the earth at the head of his master, fed or rested close beside him. The Lieutenant-General did not hesitate a moment on the prospect of beating up their quarters. Leaving sufficient force to protect the baggage from common thieves, he made every horse that he could carry double take up a swordsmen in addition to the troopers. They set out about two o'clock in the morning. Thus prepared, the camp was rather a dormitory than an encampment.

Hounds have not keener appetites for the destruction of men than common soldiers for the blood of men. The Maharattas, surprised, rose and fled like a herd of deer. Some hundreds of them were transfixed and hacked to pieces, before the shrieks of the wounded and flying could be heard amidst the exulting rattle of the unresisted slayers. Few could mount to gallop away. Many broke, and the human game was yet seen starting from its bleeding, screaming, and begging for a life, which the gladiators denied with stern derision, worthy of the well-booted gladiators of Homeric days.

This Podalirius was by no means a young man enervated by much sensibility, but one possessing dominion over his sympathies whose parts and intelligence were admirably adapted to the business of the world; yet even he, surveying this field of carnage, as if slaughter ceased, felt for a brief space the bitterness of regret that, instead of alleviating human misery, he had become a blooded, passionless butcher of men. "God of mercy," said he to himself, "can beings boasting rationality, look on these miserable bodies of their fellow creatures, and yet be urged on, from age to age, to renew such atrocities, by the baubles of calculating knowledge or the plaudits of a deluded rabble! Where is that halo which marks the conqueror as a demigod, and gains him worship? a false meteor. Pshaw! a wretched Will-o-the-wisp, formed of the steaming carrion of those who have been worshippers."

These contrite reveries were stopped by the announcement of the Beaverean, I beg pardon, the Pilean legion, which its general brought as a reinforcement, contemplating the probability of such being required. The men having suffered severely

answer from the heir apparent. He accepted their services, and announced the march of a force towards Ahmedabad, with which they were to co-operate; and likewise the advance of the army of Malwa to create a diversion in their favour. The general found in the packet a private communication also to himself. He learned from its contents, that his zeal in the cause was, by some means, intimately known to the Prince, and appreciated beyond even his sanguine expectation. The Vicegerent likewise gave him the first accurate account of the hoax on Guttlethorpe; but so far from lamenting the consequence, he rejoiced at an event which had given him an army of volunteers under such a commander. "Let us correspond confidentially," concluded the letter, "for I already regard Dalbracken not as the servant merely, but the personal friend of Dara."

JAMES.—What do those reproaches, sister's, mother's, grandmother's naughtiness, mean?

BROWNIE.—They are eastern titles of dishonour, summarily conferred on men for the supposed misconduct of female relatives, who are frequently as little known to the bestower as the merits of ennobled persons in the West.

JAMES.—May no such heathenish practice ever be introduced into this Christian land!

Now consider ye what a blot it will be if anything appear untrue in our history. I should really like to have some better authority than Captain de Jungle for saying that horses eat sheep's heads, or that ducks and partridges sit or perch on trees.

BROWNIE.—Upon the word of a Brownie, the facts are as he states them, and familiar to most people in India. When the ground is wet all kinds of birds take to the trees there.

JAMES.—Did De Jungle write a dispatch about the attack of the Maharattas, and the slaughter of them?

BROWNIE.—Yes, two, addressed to Mr Guttlethorpe, whom he still wished to keep on good terms with. You may take down the substance of both.

"To the Honourable Jehoshaphat Guttlethorpe, Esq.  
Chief of Surat, &c. &c.

"Sir, It is with the highest satisfaction that I have the honour to apprise you of the repulse and complete discomfiture of the army of Maharaja Sevajee, in an attack which it made on the English force under the command of General Malcolm Dalbracken, on the night of the 5th instant.

"The English troops, after a fatiguing march, had taken some refreshment and lain down to rest, near the village of Bullampore. A little past midnight the approach of cavalry on the left was reported to the general commanding, who had scarcely time to make the ne-

cessary dispositions for defence when the enemy, in great strength, driving in our pickets, succeeded, by a formidable onset, in penetrating to the very centre of our camp. Some time elapsed before the Maharattas could be distinguished from our own men in the dark. Major General Steelbow, at first retiring before the leading column until he could reconnoitre and ascertain their position, now became the assailant with the most happy result. This intrepid officer, slaying the two foremost of the enemy in single combat, soon after put the whole body next him to the rout. By this time the infantry, having got fairly under arms, opened a brisk fire on their adversaries, and rent the air with their cheers as the whole of Sevajee's cavalry retreated in dismay from the bivouac."

An extract may suffice from the dispatch announcing the victory of Futtymaidan.

"Major General Cambridge, in command of the rear division, receiving instructions from the Commander-in-chief to attack the Maharatta army, posted at Futtymaidan, marched during the night of the 5th, and reached that place early on the following morning. The battle began at daybreak. The enemy remained for a long time unshaken, keeping their ground with great obstinacy, until the Major-General, putting himself at the head of the cavalry, charged them so impetuously, that they were finally broken and dispersed.

"The loss which they sustained on the field and in flight is immense, and must effectually prevent them from opposing us again."

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## CHAPTER XVI.

WHEN accounts of these actions arrived at the capital of India, and reached the Emperor's ears through the channels of Dara's party, his Majesty's confidence in Jehanara's judgment returned, with proportionate distrust of the other faction. So far from appearing born to misfortune, the heir apparent now seemed miraculously lucky. The English merchants, after equipping a gallant army, had been led by a deceitful stratagem to abandon it; but the devil could do no more, for part of the brave troops kept the field, drew their swords for Dara, and had already proved twice victorious over his enemies. Ill did it become the adherents of "the pious Prince" to reproach his elder brother with employing infidels, since he himself doubtless sent Sevajee's robbers against the English. Some stress was also laid on the name of the distinguished commander of the latter, which being written always Darr Beg Khan, made him pass for an orthodox Mussulman. Roshenara, unwilling to see her father while he remained overjoyed at the gloomy prospects of her friends, retired to her own apartments, and was said to eat nothing for three days after hearing of Cambridge's sanguinary attack on the Maharattas. Jehanara, in the exultation of the moment, ventured to be-

come a prophetess in her turn. "Now," said she to her father, "that wily hypocrite who still affects to be mediating peace, whilst conducting every act of this rebellion, will not dare to detach a man from his present position for fear of the army of Malwa; Meer Khan has actually left Ahmedabad to oppose the detachment sent by Dara into Guzerat; who or what force is there besides to arrest the progress of Darr Beg Khan? My father shall hear of that General's banner waving in the capital of the province before a month elapse!" Though quite unconscious of the mighty influence of her wishes in that quarter, the Princess, in order to accelerate its fulfilment, contrived to get her prophecy made known to Dalbracken. He resolved on the instant to push forward, take P'aroach by escalade, fall upon a body of troops fully equal to his own before Cambray, whence he expected to proceed unresisted to Ahmedabad. A thousand objections were overruled by him. The festering and torturing wounds of a multitude of his men, rendered helpless for life, affected him most. To these he gave the choice of following as they could, or remaining in the villages until he was able to afford them conveyance and surgical treatment. The poor creatures refused unanimously to lose sight of Cambridge, whose superintendence and humane exertions, irradiated now by his martial fame, made him much liked by the army.

The infantry having squibbed all their ammunition into the air, by way of completing the late nocturnal victory, and Colonel de Sylva answering "No," when asked whether he could spare any powder, a lamentable deficiency of that essential article now existed. "No matter," said the General, "let us on with men and steel!" So, on they went, drawing the eyes of millions to their course, in the trembling agitation of hope or of fear. But ere they exhibit again, another scene opens in this theatre of war.

The Governor of Malwa advanced with his forces in two divisions, and desiring to quarter one of them upon the rebels, he marched it within the frontier of Guzerat. Morad, hitherto restrained by his brother's management, though raging like a chained lion, fairly broke loose and moved away with his wonted ardour to chastise the invader of his territory. Leading an impetuous charge in person, he broke his opponents at the first onset, and chased them back, dispersed and terrified, to exaggerate his valour and represent him irresistible, throughout the distant parts from which they had been enlisted.

This sudden reverse was almost a subversion of hope to the adherents of Dara. His enemies, pressing round the distracted Emperor, pretended to bewail the fall of his favourite son, whilst their directress, Roshenara, declared the way laid open, and the enraged victor ready to proceed unopposed to Agra. Her rival sister, however, claimed two battles for one, and still predicting success to Darr Beg Khan, inspired a confidence which she scarcely felt. Both princesses saw that the result of the next engagement would, in all probability, either confirm Shah Jehan's determination to sup-

port Dara, or drive him to utter despair of his cause. The renown of Meer Khan, the conqueror of the Carnatic, who approached nearer and nearer to the division of the Malwa force going against him, added greatly to other advantages which he possessed at present. The particulars of the action which ensued have been variously and contradictorily related : but no doubt could exist that Morad's lieutenant was completely victorious. The poor Emperor, unable any longer to resist such proofs of his eldest son's ill fortune, despite of Jehanara's eloquence, determining to end a bloody and useless struggle, he promised the imperial seal to a document abrogating Dara's right to the succession. Importuned further, he would have proceeded to nominate as his heir, not the rebellious boy, but the mediator of peace and loyalty, Aurungzeb, whom many represented as a paragon of excellence, alone fit to reign after such a father. But when he beheld his fond and lovely daughter, whose good sense had so often guided him, tear her hair and shed tears, the unhappy monarch wept too, and tore the paper presented for his signature.

Thus baffled by the woman, who so frequently foiled her as a politician, Roshenara resolved to stir heaven and earth, I wont add hell, the priesthood and nobility, to carry this momentous measure in favour of Aurungzeb.

Never was a female bosom held in more torturing suspense, or more oppressed with anxiety, than that of Jehanara at this crisis. The last gleam of hope shone upon her from the chance of Dalbracken's success. Her chamberlain had written him to communicate all interesting intelligence direct, and by express. Horsemen and running camels were now despatched daily from the Princess's gate, to meet and hasten in the lagging messenger, expected with such painful eagerness. Meanwhile, to add, if possible, to this distress of mind, one of those prelusive rumours of some awful occurrence, which, rather unaccountably, precedes most great events, floated, as it were, in the atmosphere of Delhi, no person knowing whence it came, or distinctly what it imported. But all who knew the posture of affairs were aware that Baroach must be captured by that time, or Dara's fate decided by the discomfiture of the assailants.

The European servants of that Prince had not shrunk from their engagement. It was day-break when Dalbracken, with the advance-guard, accompanied by the Adjutant-General, came in sight of the fort. As the light began to discover the intervening plain, the General perceived, with astonishment, the Narbudda flowing, through many windings, between him and the ramparts.—“ Why, John,” said he, “ you have committed some dreadful mistake. Baroach is undoubtedly beyond that wide river, instead of being, as you affirmed, on this side of it.” De Jungle cantered forwards about a hundred paces, as if to reconnoitre, but, in fact, to get leisure to think of an answer, in extenuation of this capital blunder, which not occurring to him, he tried, on his return, to evade the discus-

sion.—“This place is very good, General; the artillery will break ground yonder at the stream’s great bend, and plenty of space lies a little on this side for the line’s encampment.”—“What! breach the curtain over half a mile of water? This is really too much, John; but if I press you to explain such an error, you will repeat the old excuse, that somebody told you the nonsense which you tell me. Just observe there: were the wall battered where you propose, how could our column cross the river and mount the breach, under two flanking fires from the corner bastions?”—“In boats; that is the way. This country’s people like no storming; but they cannot turn back when sent in boats; and it is customary for the enemy to run away when the breach is entered.”—“John, John, my good fellow, this is no time for trifling. You have brought the life of every man in the army into jeopardy. We entertained no hopes of taking the fort otherwise than by surprise. Should Yacob ben Leeth and Sevajee, both in pursuit of us, come up, we cannot oppose them for want of ammunition, and therefore must submit to be massacred, or drowned, unless, by some miracle, we can get over the Narbudda immediately.” The garrison likewise, represented as contemptibly weak, having been strongly reinforced, men now appeared crowding, and their arms glittering, on all the defences. The outer wall, encompassing a flourishing town, and the citadel peering above it in the centre, displayed the dark muzzles of innumerable cannon pointed in every direction. Beneath this inner fortification was the desiderated magazine of gunpowder, in an immense excavation of the rock, anciently a Hindoo temple, which the Mahomedan rulers thinking inaccessible to fire, had converted to its present use. The place contained, at the present time, no less than two thousand barrels of gunpowder in bags. But the adventurers saw, when too late, that all this abundance of what they wanted might as well be in the moon for them.

Until it could be determined what to do in this alarming predicament, Mike of the Wood got orders to amuse the enemy. The gallant and taciturn Colonel going to the brink of the stream, threw up a fascine battery, and began to play upon the opposite wall as if he really intended to breach. His own men, not less than the garrison, formed a poor opinion of Mike’s scientific knowledge, when they saw him direct his shot at the base of a bastion, instead of knocking off the parapet. His adversaries returned the fire, delighted to see the fine effect of their balls in the water. Meanwhile, diligent search went on for boats, in which the General hoped to carry over a party to make a lodgement on the other side, under cover of his artillery. On this occasion Bahadur Ally, whose unimportance since returning to the East, cannot have distressed any body so much as himself, suspecting the Adjutant-General, of whom he was sadly jealous, to be in disgrace, thought he had at last found an opportunity to distinguish himself. “I beg to speak with you alone,” whispered he mysteriously to the General, and after a preface in depreciation of De Jungle’s talents, he announced his dis-



covery of an infallible scheme to capture the fort. "Well," cried Dalbracken, "let me hear it quickly."—"There is but a single well, I am quite certain, in all the place, but a very large one."—"My good Moonshee," replied the other impatiently, "you do not, I fear, understand these affairs: suppose us able to cut off the water you mention, they will still have the Narbudda to drink of."—"That is not my plan," rejoined the learned gentleman, grinning at his former pupil's simplicity, and pointing to a grave looking person who accompanied him, bearing many devout symbols of the Hindoo religion painted on his forehead. "I have bargained with this man to poison the well for only two hundred rupees, and he engages that all the Baroach people shall be dead, or very sick, by to-morrow morning." Dalbracken, horrified at the proposal, but unwilling to speak harshly to the proposer, turned his back with crossed arms, and seemed to be meditating deeply. The holy poisoner mistaking the cause of this deportment, hinted at a modification of the agreement:—"Recommend four baskets," said he, "instead of two, and I will give you a double reward. Get me three hundred, and take one."

Bahadur Ally, not letting the worthy man hear him, advanced to the General's ear, expounding the matter thus:—"His *Beek* is quite fresh from Nepal, sir, and powdered with arsenic; but, as the well is very deep, I recommend four of the baskets to be sunk in it, and if you give me five hundred rupees for him, he will do the work very cleverly."—"Orderly," cried the General, "take hold of that villain, and put him in the quarter-guard. I will presently send him to the governor of the fort to be hanged." Then addressing himself to the natives standing round him, he continued—"I hope no one believes any individual in this army infamous enough to employ such scoundrels. Bahadur Ally Khan, have the goodness to explain to them all that we regard the poisoning of an enemy with abhorrence." Bahadur Ally Khan did so very volubly, and then communed with himself in another strain. "Thy mother's naughtiness! Where is difference between giving death to sleeping man with spear, and making die by drinking nightshade? To lousy half-countryman, also infidel, Jack of Jungle, he says, take two, four thousand rupees, delve mine beneath enemy's house, and fling to hell. Then, when I request five hundred—no more—to kill plenty, and not make noise—Wah! wah! I shall eat abuse if I come to his sight alone."

Whilst the Generals deliberated in their own camp, without the range of the fort, Colonel de Sylva, having convinced the besieged that he actually had cannon-balls, next bethought him of reserving what remained for an occasion where they might be more useful. He, therefore, prepared to throw a few shells, charged with the damaged powder. These missiles, being all of the small kind, five inches and a-half in diameter, baffled Mike's science so much, that most of them missed the town, and some which fell in it did not *explode*. Mr Kirkland, whom the rescue of the late High Commissioner had elevated to gentility in public estimation, served at this

time as a volunteer in the battery. Comparing the precision with which the shot flew, and the uncertainty of the shells, Davy formed a theory of his own on the subject. "God forbid, Colonel," said he, "that I should pretend to any thing like skill in this way, only just if it were not at all unpleasant to you, would you let me shoot one of these bombs at the Governor's house with that great big gun yonder?"—"Yes," replied the commandant of artillery, but rather gruffly. The young officers smiled at the project of the volunteer; and one, more serious than the rest, recommended a howitzer. "Faith, gentlemen," answered he, "I must even go my own way to work at this present." Pulling off his coat accordingly, he proceeded to load a huge piece of Indian ordnance with several handfuls of loose powder, besides the cartridge, above which the shell was tightly rammed down, despite a grunt, accompanied with shaking of the head, from Mike of the Wood. Then clapping his shoulder to the breech, with one eye shut, as wont in taking a pot-shot at the hares nibbling his father's colewort, and elevating the muzzle until, as he announced, it covered the devoted building, Davy applied the match with his own hand. The shell, traced by its burning fuse, was presently seen bounding from the inner glacis to the middle of the citadel, where it disappeared about twenty paces out of its intended course. The impenetrable arch of the doorway, and stronger iron gate of the magazine, were there. The entrance had just been opened to let out some porters, now supplying the emergent demand for ammunition to defend the place. The shell, dropping from the terraced roof of an adjoining guard-room, rolled down the narrow staircase and burst. A terrible apparition instantly rose to the eyes of the besiegers. A banian tree of enormous magnitude, overspreading the fort and the town, seemed suddenly projected to the sky from the centre of the earth. Whirling clouds of smoke, and billows of dust pursued, followed by an ocean of flame, heaved and streaming through the ascending ruins. Masses of the rock, the domes of mosques, fragments of palaces, the weightiest implements of war, the bodies of elephants, and camels, and men, were distinguishable in the array of desolation. After appearing to hang for a moment in the dusky atmosphere, they continued to plunge in the river, and to fall in the neighbouring fields for several minutes.

The surrounding air, driven like a hurricane from the spot, laid tents and soldiers prostrate in the camp. No one there could distinctly affirm that he heard the explosion. But the terrific sound which it produced, perfectly audible fifty miles around, proclaimed the annihilation of a strong fortress and a populous city to distant provinces, with the rapidity of its motion.

In descending on human affairs, I may appear to mortals inattentive to the step said to intervene betwixt the sublime and the ridiculous. Like Colonel de Jungle and other recorders of martial achievements, I could no doubt make a selection of circumstances to propitiate the critical sensibility of wise folks, who are horrified

at being obliged to smile before they have cried their fill, through five acts, or for two hours; but nature does not observe the unities in either passion or action. In consequence, an honest historian, regardless of that effect which actors and heroes are bound to produce, must tell all the truth.

I am therefore reluctantly compelled to state, that during the awful silence which prevailed immediately subsequent to the ignition of the magazine, Colonel de Sylva and the train lay buried, the tail of his coat excepted, under the overthrown bundles of sticks and ruptured gabions, or baskets of earth, which constituted his battery. When the men began to recover from the universal consternation, the loss of any individual, amidst such wide spread havoc, appeared so trifling and probable, that little search was made for poor Mike of the Wood. The general officers approached the spot, heard the dismal tidings without surprise, and retired to a neighbouring eminence in order to survey the devastation wrought under the direction of him reported to be no more. Meanwhile Davy, somewhat hurt himself, getting to his feet, commenced a more vigorous scrutiny than native Indians would undertake for their fathers in such a predicament. At last he recognised the shred of his commander's vestment, still above ground, and tugging at it vigorously,—“Ho! Colonel,” cried he, “’tis you, I think, are you hurt, Colonel?”—“No,” replied the artillery chief, from the living tomb, his voice issuing at a distant aperture. He was soon disinterred and dusted, seated by Mr Kirkland on a remnant of the works, and preparing to refresh himself with his beloved Hookah. Mike surveyed the excavation where Baroach had been, whose blackened wrecks now cumbered the ground wherever his eye turned. Seeing their commander restored to light, the men began to raise a murmuring noise, which by degrees grew louder and louder: then shouting violently in their own praise, they ran in a confused rabble to the spot where he sat, and forcibly mounted both the gallant Colonel and his companion on gun carriages. Next elevating them on their shoulders, as kings are carried on a travelling throne, they proceeded in tumultuous procession to Dalbracken, vociferating congratulation to him on the unparalleled glory of his career, interjecting a handsome compliment to themselves, and praying him to make their commandant a general, with a flag, like the other great officers. Davod Sahib, or Mr David, as they called Kirkland, receiving much hyperbolic commendation for his promising genius, was in the same manner recommended for promotion. Steelbow, reckoning the uproar equivalent to mutiny, had by this time brought up his cavalry, and only waited orders to charge. But the Commander-in Chief said Colonel Dressup had taught him, by the rule of contradiction, another lesson. So reproving the petitioners for disorderly behaviour, he ordered them to return to their lines, observing that their request was reasonable, and would be duly considered.

Thus vanished in a moment one of the proud bulwarks of man, the ancient fortress of Baroach. The name being conferred on an

inconsiderable place in the vicinity of its site, has led historians with their usual presumption, to deny not only one of the mightiest acts of martial prowess, but the past existence of the annihilated fortifications and city. It has been well known to warriors before and since Agamemnon, that without a clever penman, their exploits do not get enough of praise. On this occasion Dalbracken dictated a few lines to Prince Dara, but in such a style of timid modesty, that he appeared unconscious of his own merit, unaware of his commanding legions of heroes, and ungenerously silent concerning the desperate valour of the enemies whom he had destroyed. The Adjutant-General, who sat by listening, said very gravely; "that is not custom, every General gives plenty of laudation when glory comes."—"Well, Jack," replied the other, "you shall presently have an opportunity of giving us our due, agreeably to the usages of war. I send a plain statement to the Prince, who will require no more to shew him our merits. But the Princess may find one of your dispatches of use at her father's court: so I beg of you to prepare an account of our success in your best Persian, to go off by express this evening. The celebrated document, composed in consequence of the request here made, bore a general resemblance to the letter of Colonel Dressup; the language being Persian instead of English, and the interspersions Arabic verse and prose instead of French. He did not, nor could he exaggerate the sublimity of the spectacle. From the habit of imitation acquired in studying models, the worthy Colonel, "because it was custom," indirectly ascribed every thing grand and terrible in the event, to the Commander's prescience and design, seconded by heroic exertion on the part of the troops. The whole composition, though by far too hyperbolic for translation, happened to be well calculated for the meridian of Delhi at that moment. Whilst on the subject of De Jungle's literary services, it may be recorded in this place, that Mr Guttlethorpe, painfully anxious to have accurate information respecting the proceedings of the adventurers whom he had abandoned, wrote secretly to the youth, once proud of his protection, in answer to his letter about the defeat of the Maharattas, begging to be favoured with his correspondence. Respect for the Chief whom he was wont to regard as a very great man, some gratitude, and not least a certain unwelcome apprehension that he might yet stand in need of support at Surat, relegated to the school house, induced the recorder of battles to gratify his old patron in a series of valuable epistles, of which more will transpire hereafter.

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**JAMES.**—Jock, verily the blood of the Kirklands riseth when you make me write that which doth injustice to my forefather's brother. Davy blew up Baroach himself, and neither Dalbracken nor De Sylva helped him with it, if I must tell you so.

**BROWNIE.**—"It is not custom," James; no military man under

the rank of General has any right to praise, unless it be emanated upon him from his Commander.

JAMES.—It may be Captain de Jungle is a juster recorder ; an i please you, let me hear his account.

BROWNIE.—An extract may do, I think ; and to satisfy you, here it is.

*Extract from a Dispatch addressed to Mr Guttlethorpe, which the writer could not prevail on Dalbracken to sign.*

“Under these unforeseen and embarrassing circumstances, I could not reasonably hope to command success, otherwise than by firing the magazine itself. This duty, though in the highest degree arduous and difficult, did not appear impracticable. But extraordinary talents being demanded to meet the emergency, I sent Colonel de Sylva the assistance of Mr Volunteer Kirkland, with whose genius and practical knowledge of gunnery I had long been intimately acquainted. This gentleman, having completed his scientific observations, and calculated the range, proceeded with the approbation of the commandant of artillery, to prepare an Indian gun of the largest calibre, which he preferred to a howitzer or mortar for this service. Having laid this piece of ordnance and loaded it he applied the match likewise with his own hand. Such was the admirable precision of his art, that the very first shell thrown by him accomplished my wishes, and penetrated by the only aperture into the magazine, when,” &c. &c.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

THE dispatch, forwarded by a relay of messengers who rode fleet camels, fortunately reached its destination a considerable time before the faction of Aurungzeb had learnt which party was victorious at Baroach. This priority enabled the Princess to execute a plan which she conceived might blow up the industrious band of intriguers, as effectually as Dalbracken had destroyed their stronghold. But for some hours after the arrival of the intelligence, her masculine understanding gave way to the excess of joy that took possession of a heart purely feminine, previously oppressed with despairing anxiety. Taking refuge in apartments accessible to her ladies only, she made others believe that the news just received having thrown her into despair, she could not see any person, not even the Emperor.

The watchful Roshenara lost not a moment to summon her friends for a grand effort. Enticing Shah Jehan to her place of

residence in the palace, at the time when the whole party, priests, nobles, and vagabond saints, assembled in the hall, and the ladies of their families behind the curtain, she seated his Majesty there on a throne. The high priest, the same dignitary whom the Franciscan met in controversy, pluming himself on the possession of great eloquence, stood foremost as spokesman on this occasion. The speech which he delivered was artfully calculated to work on the feeblest points of the decayed mind of a man tremblingly alive to whatever affected the future renown of his family, and that renewal of existence which a father enjoys by anticipation in his children. Nor did he forget the sacerdotal function in disclosing what sort of reception the soul of his sovereign might eventually expect in the world to come. I have private reasons for declining to translate eloquence. And besides, as is well known to all the uninitiated who ever consulted an Oriental scholar, the sublimities and beauties of Arabic and Persian are absolutely untranslatable. The bombast, however, is more translatable. I therefore select the peroration of the pious divine's harangue, as the most convenient, and perhaps important part of it for my purpose. One passage requires previous explanation. The Faction, turning the awful sound heard on the frontiers of Guzerat to their own advantage, called it a terrible thunder-storm raised by special interference of Providence, to destroy the army of infidels whom they affirmed to be a race of crusaders against Islamism. "Remember," said the preaching politician, "remember almighty Emperor, that whoso subjects moslems to the sword of the unbelieving, brings down a curse whereby his progeny shall be extinguished here, and the gate of perdition thrown open to his undying spirit hereafter."—"What have I done, Minister of the Faith?" cried the poor Monarch, stretching out his hands with an expression of unfeigned misery in his countenance; "what have I done? The deeds of my youth are repented of, and atoned for by prayer, and alms, and donations to holy men, and the endowment of many mosques: are these hands not guiltless of blood in Shah Jehan's old age?"—"Lord of the seven climates," continued the High Priest, in the humblest of attitudes, "this slave is but a worm in the presence, yet he speaks the will of Heaven! The Nazarenes, the accursed tribe who essayed to subvert the throne of Saladin, and reign in his land, have slain thousands of the Faithful whilst eating the salt of thy first-born son, whom thou hast appointed to rule over us. But the infidels have perished! The thunder of the Most High has echoed far that gave their carcasses to the vulture! Yet again, O King of kings, the banner of the Faith is raised, and its followers are not appeased that those hirelings are low. They grasp the spear against that unhappy Prince who leagued with the unbelievers. Yea, that voice of consenting millions, which is the kettle-drum of God announcing his

wrath, declares that Dara shall not reign!" At this instant, whether by accident or design, a noise proceeded from the adjoining court like the clamour of an assembling mob. "Alas! alas!" cried the Emperor, "my unfortunate Dara is deserted by the people too, and even Jehanara no more comes to plead for him. What would ye, O my friends, that I should do?"—"King of the world," rejoined the orator, "let not the house of Timur be swept from the throne of the Moguls, by making Dara its representative; deliver not up thy people, their wives and daughters also, to an heretical voluptuary, nor to a licentious youth glorying in lewdness and carnage!" To give effect to these conjurations, the women listening behind the curtain, wailed in chorus, beating their breasts in a peculiar manner, which interrupted and modulated the voice to greater pathos. When the reverend speaker came to the point in his climax, "Proclaim the wise, the fortunate, and righteous Prince Aurungzeb heir-apparent and vicegerent of thy empire," the High Priest and all present, as soon as he ceased speaking, threw their turbans at the foot of the throne, and fell prostrate with their faces to the ground. The ladies joined this solemn form of petitioning, with imploring ejaculations for success. Shah Jehan, whispering to Roshenara's minister, who stood at his ear, learnt that the document was ready for signature. When he sent to the Princess for it, she thought the measure carried which must bring an accession of strength to Aurungzeb's cause that nothing could afterwards oppose, and dispatched an attendant to order an hundred cannon to be got ready to announce the event at the moment when the deed should receive the imperial signet. The emperor was taking the gold chain from his neck by which the seal hung suspended in his bosom, to let it be dipped in ink, when he heard the citizens shouting vociferously, "May Shah Jehan live!"—"Sultan Dara, live for ever!"—"Victory! victory!" The female voices within, erewhile so soft and plaintive, seemed all of a sudden turned to harsh and angry notes, whilst confusion audibly prevailed in their movements. One had entered like a scaring apparition to the assemblage, and taken her place next the curtain, whose lips never uttered a sound unpleasant to her father's ear. "Light of my eyes!" cried he, forgetting perfect propriety, "art thou there? Tell me, Jehanara, is Dara victorious, and are the rebels beaten?" Her chamberlain, who stood close by within the hall, received the dispatch written by De Jungle from her hand, with the injunction, "Read that aloud to His Majesty!" Meanwhile she glanced into the apartment to enjoy the ludicrous spectacle of the right reverend fathers and most noble lords, with shaven heads exposed, crawling in search of turbans, and regaining their feet, fully sensible of the ridiculous figure which they were making before the brightest eyes in the East.

*I have seen heather catch fire in the West, and the confa-*

gration of an Eastern jungle run like a torrent against the wind. But the report of the annihilation of Baroach surpassed both in its rapid effect. I will allow something for the majestic loveliness of Jehanara appearing amongst the women, radiant with joy which they felt infectious. Yet the florid description of those astounding realities characterising the volcanic destruction of a fortified city full of human beings, which electrified grey-bearded warriors and divines, is mainly due to the writer. Hypocrisy and time serving doubtless actuated some who wished to propitiate whomsoever might prevail. All of them, however, thought the event transcendently glorious. Roshe-nara and the High-Priest were mute. The few too deeply implicated to think of turning or dissembling, were glad to get leave to retire. On their way home, they heard the hundred guns fired, to spread the news of that Prince's triumph whom they met to degrade, and in honour of his infidel army, whose carcases they affirmed Heaven to have given to the vultures.

In camp and at court, Dara's cause had once more the ascendancy. That excitement of the imagination produced by success in war, which overpowers reason, and spreads with epidemic fury through whole nations, exactly what Aurungzeb plotted assiduously to raise on his own behalf, was setting in alarmingly against him. A losing gambler rattles the dice louder, and throws with violence. The Lord of the Deccan had not the sensibility which causes strong emotion, but he was thrown into great perplexity by the intelligence from Delhi. Immediately after the disaster at Baroach, Meer Khan comforted him by promising the speedy discomfiture of the Christians, to oppose whom, he was moving in the direction of Cambay. To make the success of this officer certain, Aurungzeb now exerted himself to the utmost. Although the force already mustered was double that under Dalbracken, calculating wisely that quadruple odds in his favour would be a preferable proportion still, he urged Sevajee and Yacoob ben Leeth to lose no time in revenging the insults which both of them had received. To keep his restless brother quiet, the Prince affected to obey his commands, and prepare to march through Malwa to the capital. He made this promise merely to amuse Morad, who waited impatiently for a convoy bringing treasure from Ahmedabad to pay his troops, and put them in good humour before starting. But affairs assuming a different aspect, opinion being as much on Dara's side as physical power, Aurungzeb saw the necessity of vigorous measures, and began to think in earnest of following his brother's plan. The Vicegerent again, from a mistrust of the Maharana, justified by circumstances, did not choose to detach more troops from Ajmeer, in order to put Malwa in a defensive state subsequent to the late overthrow of the imprudent Governor; nor to relinquish his central position until it appeared decidedly which way the wavering expedients of Aurung-



zeb would lead him. The latter Prince, perceiving that the concentration of the forces from distant parts of his province, which he presently ordered, would divulge his designs to those whom he still deceived, proceeded in his usual manner.

In a long letter to the Emperor, clogged with epithets professing veneration, filial piety, and absolute obedience to the will of his father and sovereign, he lamented the failure of his unwearied efforts to preserve peace. Just as the warlike and ambitious youth had been brought by exhortation to a proper sense of his wickedness, in contemplating rebellion and usurpation, his martial spirit was inflamed and goaded to act in defending Guzerat against invading robbers who had no authority from his Majesty. "The feeble armies of misguided Dara," said he, "have perished before Morad's invincible bands; and nothing but the influence which Heaven enables me to exert over his mind, hath staid his course, or withheld him from marching, unopposed, to the cities of sovereignty and of inherited empire. But even I," continued he, "am at length roused by the voices of holy men, and the groans of your Majesty's subjects. An execrable pack of the dogs of Jesus, delighting in rapine and blood, are hunting down the faithful in Guzerat. Where will the unhallowed devastation end, if they be not exterminated? May the King of kings permit that I call together the armies of the Deccan, to protect from slaughter and defilement the believing people whom God and that sovereign have committed to my care." Having dispatched this epistle to Delhi, he wrote another, in a tone of equally devout sincerity, conjuring Prince Suja immediately to claim the throne and move towards Agra, where he would find the army of the Deccan ready to second him. The assemblage of his troops, the arrival of Morad's treasure, and the junction of the three divisions in motion against Dalbracken, expected to occur almost simultaneously, were to be instantly followed by the march of the chief rebels towards the capital cities.

Dara, penetrating these designs, was by no means ignorant of the peril in which he stood. But with all the resources of the empire at command, while Suja threatened the eastern provinces, he could do no more than order the army of Moultan into Guzerat. This measure, however, promised little more than to counterpoise the defection or treacherous neutrality of Jeswunt Sing, as the distance must preclude the force of that country from succouring the Europeans before they were attacked. Another scheme of the Vicegerent's to aid them proved more fortunate in the result. Shortly after the departure of Colonel Dressup, the Prince, in appointing a new Governor of Surat, enjoined him to engage as many as possible of the English officers and men, to return to their victorious comrades in his service. The new levies being all discharged on their return by the Chief, this invitation was accepted with avidity.

De Jungle's secret dispatches, copies of which were circulated about the same time, set the whole Factory a dancing. A military ardour pervaded all classes and characters. The women in particular had discovered Dalbracken's talents long before; the writers, his unfortunate compeers, panted to join his standard, at least they said so, and though many through envy would have rejoiced to hear of his being hanged, they bellowed his praise, lest others should suspect them of wanting martial spirit. Even Dressup, the stiff unfeeling martinet, contrasting the inglorious life into which he was about to relapse, with the glowing zeal displayed by the young officers and men, when mustered to ratify their enlistment before the Governor, drawing his sword, and jumping forward to his old place in front of the line, like a frisking buffalo, "Here am I too, my brave boys, ready to lead you to victory again!—if," continued he, recollecting the rules and regulations, "if my commanding officer shall be pleased to approve and confirm this my volunteering." A burst of laughter, repeated in peals from light hearts, at his awkward enthusiasm, was the only reply vouchsafed to the mortified Colonel. Mr Guttlethorpe, observing likewise that he had some difficulty in restraining himself from taking the field, resolved to explain his conduct to the hero of the day. Ordinary persons thought it difficult to do this satisfactorily to both parties. But the Chief of Surat was a politician prolific in ways and means. The measures which, under existing circumstances, and the exigency of the time, he had found it expedient to take, he presumed his friend's sagacity must commend as politic. Then launching into panegyric on the felicity with which Dalbracken hit "the middle course," he congratulated him on the fair prospect that he had of making the Honourable Company princes, without compromising their interests if he failed. "I am ready here, proceeded the Chief, to confirm whatever you may accomplish for our good. But *Faridoon the Happy was not an angel of musk and ambergris*; and if you should happen to be unfortunate, my duty to our honourable masters will not permit me to acknowledge you. Were a retreat, or anything of that sort to be necessary, you know what a weak place the Factory is, and I would recommend you to retire towards the residence of Willy-a-head, who is said to be a very good man. I shall be glad to hear from yourself when you have leisure, or when too much engaged from our friend Jack, that I may keep Sir Josiah advised of your victories. That was a glorious dust you kicked up at Baroach, as we know to our cost, for it broke seven panes in the windows of the garden house."—Dalbracken, who now understood the character of this oriental statesman, was far more amused than offended, at the ingenious project here developed, of appropriating his success and disowning his failure. "There, Jack," said he, "I

hope you will gratify the old gentleman, though I am not prepared to acknowledge any strong claim of his on our gratitude."

The four thousand regular infantry arrived just as the army was crossing the Narbudda. This welcome rejunction demanded new arrangements of importance. Mike of the Wood, raised to dignity like the long-haired kings, was already Major-General elect. The Commander-in-Chief, having experienced embarrassment and trouble from the extreme credulity and endless delegation of duty which characterized his principal staff-officer, resolved on elevating him also to higher rank. Indeed Colonel de Jungle, like most Europeans who attain to intimate knowledge and familiar intercourse with the natives of India, was the dupe of their interested artifices. Two efficient persons were now appointed adjutant-general and quarter-master-general. The charge of the intelligence department, conferring no control over any officer, and being consequently less invidious, was bestowed upon David Kirkland, with the designation of Ensign. The two additional legions now formed, were called *Betulian* and *Sartorian*, in allusion to the former callings of the commanders, who neither understood nor would have cared anything about the literal meaning of the words. De Sylva displayed a flying shell, and De Jungle a melon proper, both irradiant on a red ground, the latter bearing on a scroll, underneath the motto, "Excellent Glory." The banners had also tasteful borders, one being enwreathed with twigs of birch, and the other adorned with shears expanded, which inaccurate writers have taken for crosses, symbolical of Christianity. Yet amidst all this pomp, the only treasury which the Generals could draw on, was the patience of an army strangely organized; nor had any military stores been acquired by the last magnificent exploit. The distance of the force sent in aid with ample supplies of both from Dara, precluded the hope of early assistance from him. Surat had little enough for its own defence. When in grave deliberation on the subject, Ensign Kirkland announced to the council intelligence of forty chests containing as many laks of rupees being on the way from Ahmedabad to King Akbar. A sufficient detachment under Bethel and Steelbow immediately proceeded to capture this money.

Meanwhile, as it behoved the divisions to separate somewhat, Major-General Michael de Sylva, taking post at the extremity of the line, unfurled his banner amidst the shouts of the Sartorian legion, who gazed with delight at the emblem blazing in its bloody field, like a portentous comet to the garrison of Cambay, which was next threatened with his wrath.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE late eminent Professor of Oriental languages in London, was now a querulous and disappointed man. His countrymen in general do not consider the want of ability to discharge the duties of an office a reasonable cause of exclusion from it after they have duly propitiated the patron. But Bahadur Ally, besides allowable expectations from pupils who certainly owed him much, had other unavowed pretensions which may seem extraordinary and scarcely consistent. These were his knowledge of English, which ought to recommend him strongly to Englishmen; and his orthodox faith, that demanded both respect and preferment from Christian infidels. The last claim is not uncommon, though seldom expressed to Europeans, among the natives of British India at this day. It originates partly in the Hindoo system, which would require a son of the servile tribe to neglect his father in order to serve a Bramin; but chiefly, and it might entirely arise from the self-degradation of Britons, who very rightly intending merely to tolerate superstition, have admitted every absurd assumption, and taken their place as the lowest caste in India. They might with equal facility and the best policy, instead of the worst, have been the highest. The learned teacher, thinking that De Jungle stood in his way, rejoiced at his promotion, as if it had been the Major-General's execution, but was horror-struck to see Davy advanced to the situation which he wanted for himself. Dalbracken having given him the post of Persian Secretary, with the promise of a handsome salary, could not conceive why a person devoid of energy in action, and without knowledge of business, should so eagerly covet power and influence. I shall occasionally disclose more on this head than the Commander-in-Chief knew. Meanwhile, when native officers were to be selected for advancement to higher grades in the new legions, Bahadur Ally Khan saw no reason why his acquisition of English should not become useful. Listening to the conversation of the Generals, who never suspected the man's integrity, he managed to retain in his memory a pretty accurate list of those whom they resolved to elevate in rank. They, still unconscious of their impending good fortune, proud to receive visits from a gentleman in office at headquarters, rejoiced to learn how highly he appreciated their merits, and felt so grateful when he offered spontaneously to further their views, that every one of them made the Secretary a handsome present. The promotions being duly announced, just as he promised, the principal got credit for participating in the collections of his agent, for in that character did the parties

concerned regard their learned patron on this occasion. On knowing more of Dalbracken, they acquitted him of the venality, but always believed in the paramount influence of his native secretary.

Another proceeding of the same gentleman at this time proved somewhat less successful. Anxious to get Kirkland into disgrace as soon as possible after his installation in office, he tampered with the spies to give Davy false information. Davy, distinguishing the commencement of his career by ascertaining the dispatch of the treasure, found out besides that the convoy consisted of 10,000 men, who, after protecting it to what was deemed the dangerous part of the road, were to be reinforced by a party of equal strength from Yacoob ben Leeth. Davy marvelled that his emissaries should bring no account of the last detachment. Nay, they positively maintained that no armed men existed in that quarter. By assiduous enquiry, however, the first intelligence was fully confirmed. The treacherous couriers, frightened and cross-questioned, accused Bahadur Ally of ordering them to conceal the fact from the Head of the Intelligence Department, as they pretended to believe, by General Dalbracken's command. Mr Kirkland, justly indignant, lodged his complaint. Strong as the evidence seemed, the Commander-in-Chief scouted the notion that a person of such respectability could, without adequate or intelligible motives, commit an act which might have led to most disastrous consequences. Satisfied accordingly with his former preceptor's solemn denial, he dismissed the informers from his service. The two legions were now to take advantage of the important information obtained. Bethel, with all his infantry, proceeded by a practicable but little known route through the jungle to the spot at which the two parties of the enemy were to meet. Steelbow, his coadjutor, commanding the whole cavalry under both, pushed rapidly towards the ten thousand men detached from Yacob's army. He came on them at the village of Caliwass. Having just pitched their tents, the people were straggling over the fields in search of fuel, or stripped to the waist, boiling pots and kneading dough by their fires, from which smoke was ascending in thousands of places. The insufficient force on duty fled as soon as Steelbow's trumpet sounded the charge. The rest, abandoning everything, disappeared with equal celerity. The commanding-officer, horses, and arms in abundance, remained in the hands of the victors.

Bethel having, by intercepting passengers and other effectual means, kept the convoy ignorant of these movements, proceeded, when joined by the victorious legion, to lead the enemy into an ambushade. He was prompted to this measure by aversion to shed blood. His native officers as well as Europeans, who were let into the secret, murmured at the inglorious part which they were to act in capturing booty without destroying some of those

who guarded it. Steelbow held the same sentiment, but the senior officer continued immovable. He posted the infantry in the wood, on both sides of a ravine, which the treasure must pass, where they were concealed, with the exception of a few hundreds who wore dresses exactly like those of Yacob's men. The stratagem succeeded to admiration at first. When the forty carts had fairly descended into the hollow, the men emerging from ambush, pointed their loaded fire-arms down upon the escort from all points of the surrounding banks. Steelbow at the same instant deployed his horse, the enemy's cavalry following and preceding, seeing their presence useless, went off at the gallop. Resistance would have been absurd. The commander accordingly offered to surrender. Bethel advanced in person to see his adversaries disarmed, still dreading lest his people should come into collision with them. He had gone but a few steps, when he perceived a tumult, and heard the enemy's guards breaking two of the chests. The captors threatening and bellowing in vain, an individual, without orders, discharged his matchlock. The report served as the signal for a universal explosion of all the rest, showering bullets on the devoted party. Who can stop this spontaneous firing amongst the best disciplined troops? Though it had been anxiously deprecated and forbidden, Bethel earned that glory with which blood alone irradiates victory. Forty laks, £400,000, were thus secured for the exigences of the army.

When the conquerors returned to head-quarters, De Jungle forthwith set about registering and diffusing their fame. In writing to Mr Guttlethorpe, and in dictating the general orders, a privilege still willingly conceded to the Major-General, he bestowed the highest praise on the judgment and valour of his friends, to which alone the capture of so much treasure was ascribable, without forgetting the determined bravery of one commander who scorned to fly, and of another who fell nobly at his post, on the part of the enemy. The heavy loss of the Moguls proved, as usual, their desperate resistance, and the heroism required to overthrow them. The battles of Caliwass and of the Ravine shed new lustre on the path of the adventurers. No sooner had pay been distributed, than pedlars and merchants of all sorts crowded into the camp, like vultures to the fields which the army had won. The speculators found such characters labouring, as they anticipated, under the usual impatience of money. Every expensive foppery of dress or arms was purchased with avidity. Steelbow's prisoner being a gay young Mogul, he had made free with his splendid wardrobe. The frock of red satin, superbly embroidered, became the Chief of the Beaver exceedingly well. Twisting a turban of cloth of gold round the European helmet, he adorned it in front with no less than three gorgeous *Culgis* or Egrettes, in imitation of the Prince of Wales' plume. The trappings, whether of his horse or per-

son, combined everything gaudy, and occasionally tawdry, in European or Asiatic extravagance. His example spread wide. Excepting the three principal officers, the whole camp seemed a convocation of coxcombs. Mike of the Wood, seeing all allowed to please their fancies, still maintained his pre-eminence as the oddest figure among them. A Portuguese colonel having once visited Surat in a uniform that fired Michael's youthful imagination, he cut an exact copy of it now, and superintended the sewing. At present the most remarkable additions to his dress were a coarse frill projecting, by virtue of starch, one foot from his breast; and yet more conspicuously, a cue that hung down his back, hard as a switch, from within an inch of the head, when uncovered, but which, when the Major-General put on his laced cocked-hat, stuck out horizontally from the nape of his neck.

Dalbracken, amidst this trifling, manifested the greatest anxiety to get forward. So confident was every warrior now of the Commander-in-Chief's invincibility, that no one presumed to count or to care for the overwhelming numbers in motion against him. They received with hearty cheers the order at last to march by the right. The Sartorian Legion, consequently, forming the van, moved towards Cambay. News passed along like lightning, that the destroyer of Baroach was advancing to annihilate, in his terrible manner, every fort that opposed him. Deputies from fifty alarmed places surrounded his quarters, offering keys, presents, and petitions, to appease the wrath of him whose symbol and exterminating shears waving overhead, inspired additional terror. Mike would receive none but the Cambay deputation, the members of which afterwards proclaimed his laconic wisdom in negotiation equal to his military science. Smoking very gravely during a long-winded harangue, intended to wile him away to richer places, and leave their poor fort alone, he answered merely by a shake of the head. This appeared awfully ominous. They next began humbly to interrogate the silent commander: "May we hope that his Highness grants the prayer of his slaves?"—"No."—"Alas! alas! does your Majesty of exalted fame, mean to blow us up?"—"Yes."—"Hoi! hoi! we will surrender at discretion. Cambay is your Majesty's; take it, and us all as your subjects."—"Very well." So saying he laid aside the hookah snake, and sent the deputies to make their submission to General Dalbracken, under an honorary guard.

Thus did the very name of their past deeds acquire what is called the sea-port of Ahmedabad, with abundance of the stores of which they were most in want. The garrison had fled, declaring their inability to hold out against such besiegers, and leaving the inhabitants, as we have just seen, to make terms for themselves.

*It was now evident to all that the contest must be presently*

decided by the meeting of the two mighty rivals. Meer Khan had earned the highest renown as a general; and flushed with recent victory, he gave his party well-grounded hopes of success. Before the battle of the Ravine and the loss of so much treasure, this active officer, no way doubtful of discomfiting the Christians, proposed immediately afterwards to invade Ajmeer. Akbar the Second accordingly, following his suggestion, permitted his Lieutenant to fall upon the heir-apparent, or hang on his rear, should that Prince interrupt his Majesty's progress to Agra. But that enemy which appeared so contemptible at first, now assumed another aspect. The late unexpected reverses, together with the rejunction of the disciplined battalions from Surat, compelled one of Meer Khan's cautious valour to proceed with more delay and circumspection than he originally expected to find necessary. He was already in person with the division near Cambay, waiting the arrival of the troops that had defeated Dara's detachment. They joined him at this time without opposition, making his entire force somewhat superior to Dalbracken's army. Yet the wise leader perceiving how much recent events, elating the one and depressing the other, tended to impel his adversary's men forward and his own backward, determined to avoid an action. His object was to let that fervidness of spirit evaporate which, while it lasts, makes soldiers fight like fanatics for martyrdom; and also to gain time for the arrival of his allies, when the issue of an engagement would be no longer problematical. But far from avowing such an intention, he gave out that the retreat of the infidels was to be cut off, in order that his orthodox warriors might enjoy their complete extermination. Meer Khan consequently moved easterly, towards the point whence his opponents came. The evolutions, stratagems, and deceits now practised by this consummate commander, shewed the vast importance of experience and knowledge in the art of war. Dalbracken, secretly admiring his rival, and diffident of himself, was, however, from policy, the first to proclaim the enemy afraid to fight; a sentiment in which his followers loudly joined. The extraordinary impatience and precipitancy betrayed by him on this occasion, proceeded from no other motive than the romantic wish to fulfil Jehanara's prophecy. Ere twelve days elapse, the Burning Fairy, as his fantastic banner was called by the people, must wave over the citadel of Ahmedabad! An empty display, however, would not suffice. His entrance into the capital must denote the conquest of the province. Without perceiving the artful plan of Meer Khan, he was utterly provoked at the procrastination obviously contemplated by that great person. Seeing the impossibility of immediately compelling him to hazard his fortune and the succession to the Mogul throne, he sent a haughty challenge inviting the General of the rebels to meet him in a pitched battle. The Lieutenant of



Guzerat replied with the most supercilious coolness, that the armies of the Faithful could on no account accept such an invitation from unbelieving malefactors, whom heaven had already devoted to destruction. "You cannot escape," said he, "but are doomed to come after us, even as dogs which you are, until we find leisure to turn about and smite ye, unless the unclean shall acknowledge the Prophet and be circumcised." So daring an insult demanded speedy vengeance. By several forced marches, Dalbracken rejoiced to find himself gaining on the enemy. Major-General Steelbow, with the van, first overtook a party whom, to his great surprise, he found apparently waiting to receive him. It was the rear, consisting, to all appearance, entirely of horse, posted on a wide road surrounded by jungle, and under the command of the renowned Meer Khan himself. Steelbow, out of his wits with joy at beholding such a prize within reach, made his cavalry instantly form in close order, trot, canter, and as the trumpet directed, begin to charge at the gallop. No sooner had the assailants reached a marked spot, than the Moguls, parting to right and left, prepared, by passing behind the thickets, to turn their flanks. Thirteen guns, the proper number to salute a Major-General, now displayed their grisly muzzles, and went off at once. The Salvo, though pointed rather high, one shot grazing a corner of the torn beaver, and another carrying away the middle egret of its chief, bore havoc and dismay into the ranks of the troopers, who turning round, fled back ten times faster than they had advanced. The enemy, as instructed, joining from both sides when the flight of balls passed, drew up on the road to intercept and cut the fugitives to pieces. Meanwhile, the repulsed cavalry rushing along, enveloped in thick smoke which the wind drove after them, plunged, neither seeing nor distinctly seen, amongst their intended destroyers, with an overwhelming shock that gave them a complete victory. Borne down and scattered, this body of the enemy vanished instantly. Meer Khan, confounded as he was by the result of his deep-laid artifice, resolving not to delay lest the other legions should overtake him, marched off with his guns. The conquerors could not stop for some time, nor recover from their astonishment, until they found themselves alone on the field. It appearing then quite evident that they had defeated the Moguls, officers and men began to shout with all their might. "Ho! friend," cried the Pilean chief to a villager, "what call you that place?"—"Khur Bagh," replied the man. Steelbow, gasping in vain to get up the gutturals, said he would be d—d if so good a *Brush* went by a beastly name, and directed that the exploit should descend to future times as "the battle of the Salvo." The report of the cannon having caused a reinforcement to be pushed forward, Major-General de Jungle now arrived, and was welcomed by all as the prime herald of fame. After listening attentively to the detail of circumstances, he

pronounced a very satisfactory opinion on the merits of the combatants. "First, you charge and overthrow the Moghuls, driving them right and left. Secondly, while in jaws of their battery, under tremendous fire, you change front, charge other time, and put the enemy to total rout. That is very good glory—the day will be notorious to all the world."

"The Brush with Will Pin, as the victor styled it, gave the Commander-in-Chief peculiar satisfaction at this crisis. He granted the Pilean banner the honorary augmentation of the words "Caliwass," and "Salvo" in radiant letters. He next laboured with incredible zeal to circumvent Meer Khan, whom he designated an insolent bigot; but since the interview with Yacoob ben Leeth, he could not bear to hear him called a European, otherwise than, as Morad always got the name of King Sawney, for Mr Guttlethorpe's sake. Yet the unsuccessful stratagem had an accidental character, and the practical joke played off in the recognition of Steelbow's rank with the cannon, denoted either European knowledge, or secret intelligence alarmingly accurate. There was more in the last surmise than the General ever discovered. Whenever the laws which regulate morality, freedom, honour, in civilized society, are suspended, whether by civil despotism or war, the office of a spy becomes essential and important. A right equal to that which gives him employment, authorizes every gentleman of this profession to dispose of his information, like other merchandise in demand, to the highest bidder. The mercantile disposition of the fraternity being fully known to the Nabob Meer Khan, his Excellency had with all convenient expedition bestowed salaries on the emissaries of Mr David Kirkland, who did not suspect one of them of having two masters. No doubt both paid them, but the Commander of the Moghuls, by giving double wages, purchased the twofold privilege of learning the truth for his own benefit, and dictating whatever falsehoods he desired to communicate to his enemy. The rogues after daily recitations, told circumstantial stories, having on the surface enough that was visibly or provably true to cover deception. "The army of Yacoob ben Leeth," said they, is starving for want of provisions, at the distance of eighty miles, a league and a quarter from Crowley, in the purgunnah of Jootabad. Sevajee's rabble is in a state of mutiny; Gudah Pursad, a Rusildar or Captain, was blown from a gun three days ago; Purthi Sing and eighteen of his men were trampled to death by elephants, but all in vain; the Raja remained a prisoner in his own tent, where he run the greatest risk of being torn to pieces by an infuriated soldiery."—"I have no anxiety about these worthies," said Dalbracken; "besides, a burnt child dreads the fire; and after letting us alone when we had no powder, they are not likely to come near now, unless *Mr Pin* should condescend to turn round and execute the malefactors, in which case they may venture to look at us when gibbeted. I mean, how-

ever, if a victory were certain, they would willingly partake of it. But as Steelbow has made that more doubtful to them than ever, I feel confident that both of them, independently of starvation and mutiny, will keep back in the meantime, and run away after we have defeated their Commander-in-Chief. Now, since Davy's information is so well confirmed by these circumstances, we are at least sure of Jacob and the Maharattas being too far off to co-operate with Meer Khan. Let us therefore stop, attack, and overthrow him immediately. We shall then enter Ahmedabad in triumph by the 25th of this month, and by so doing, fulfil a prediction which, among these superstitious people, will for ever repress the hopes of the rebel Princes, and secure the succession to Dara."—"Very cogent reasoning, Dalbracken," said Cambridge, with whom he was closetted; "and truly, I have seldom seen you so grave since our bright career began."—"Well, but listen," rejoined the General.—"Yes, I will," replied the Lieutenant-General, "but you pronounced the great affairs of the world the other day, to be like a pendulum vibrating between the church and the cavern, so pray tell me to which this awful and mysterious prophecy tends, for it seems to haunt you, though nobody else ever heard of it."—"I was informed of it," answered the other gravely, "by the Princess's chamberlain."—"Hum!" ejaculated Cambridge, "a woman's-eunuch! we suspected you to be guided by a supernatural whisper from the burning Fairy."—"No, upon my honour!" cried Dalbracken, hastily and perturbed.—"Cambridge, don't believe me superstitious, but recollect that where we are, superstition is a resistless current of the human mind, with which we may sail to pryncedoms, while an attempt to rise against it must subject us to certain shipwreck."—"My dear fellow, I shall talk seriously, since you are in earnest. We are pretty well agreed about the folly of wisdom in our present vocation. Were I to reason on the subject, I should decidedly declare our measures rash and impracticable. Is it within the limits of probability, that twenty thousand men, commanded by youths like us, should subdue this immense province, defended not only by the numerically superior armies of Meer Khan, of Yacoub ben Leeth, and a myriad of Maharattas, but by two imperial princes with all the resources of the Deccan? To overcome one of these were nothing; entering the capital town without beating all of them, would be only vain-glory. Prudence, common sense, as applicable to the ordinary affairs of life, would bid us keep possession of Cambay, and hold out until the arrival of an army from Dara sufficiently strong to cope with his rebel brothers and all their allies. In short, we cannot encounter the whole of our enemies; the defeat of one is not worth what it must cost; and to ourselves, the loss of a single action is irretrievable ruin."—"Heavens!" exclaimed the General, "what a gloomy picture you draw; do not let us despond!"—"Ha!"

resumed his friend, "that comes of making a man talk rationally. But speaking of warfare, I have not so much of Basilini's monitor in me yet. No, no, my Lord General, I am ready once more to throw the dice of battle, though they be (horribly!) made of Death's heads; and you, or I, or that tent-pole, know equally well what may turn up. Now for the route; hand me Davy's chart."—"There," said the other, "is a road for cavalry. Find you head and hand, and taking Steelbow as a hammer to lay on if necessary: you can easily reach the pass a day before Meer Khan, in order to dispute it with him until we come up."—"Certainly; I understand it perfectly. But, Dalbracken, that is the famous ravine where Bethel earned so much renown; will he not be offended at your overlooking his local experience and employing another on this occasion?"—"Bethel takes things too much to heart," replied the General, "he could not endure, he says, to look again on the scene of what he calls a brutal massacre."

The Podalirian and Pilean Cavalry getting presently under arms, marched after night-fall with the most expeditious secrecy. As they proceeded, and the detachment buried itself amidst the jungle, the entire army of Yacoob ben Leeth, making two forced marches, crossed the ravine and joined the Lieutenant of Guzerat. He now made his united forces communicate at a point, extending them in lines forming the sides of a triangle, of which the Maharattas were forthwith to be the base. Dalbracken's consternation at seeing his front and flanks thus invested, had not time to lessen, when Sevajee, with an armed rabble of one hundred thousand men, sat down in his rear.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

THE surface of Guzerat, in those days, had perhaps more resemblance than now to the general aspect of India. The field on which the two armies were to encounter was an immense plain, bounded to the view only by the far haze of the horizon, and opposing so few obstacles to the movements of cavalry, that Sevajee's hordes, on the present occasion, had advanced fifty miles without a halt. Here and there, however, the dark outline of a ravine appeared, winding through its course like the volutions of a snake. The uncultivated ground, bereft of herbage by the sun, exhibited nothing but thorny shrubs, and other diminutive bushes. Enclosed by fences of the same dreary plants, uprooted, many green crops lay in the distance. The

grand staple of the province, likewise, the remote cause of these stern commotions, the cotton, bursting the pod, and waving peacefully to the breeze on its native stalk, spotted the waste with white. Within the ample space now encompassed by the rebel armies, a grove of mango trees lifted the round or conical heads of its trees in a continuous canopy of verdure, which threw an expanse of shade over the ground whence their stems grew. Herds of deer and antelopes gazed on the array, or running in blind terror, made their way through the armed ranks which they intended to flee from. A flock of peafowl, taking refuge amongst the thick foliage, raised their harsh and woful scream, as if conscious of the mortal devastation presently to ensue.

When Dalbracken saw himself completely surrounded, he lost no time in calling the Generals together. "Now," said he, "let me use few words, and dispense with idle talk about errors of subordinates whom I am responsible for. I have been outwitted, overreached, and mastered by the enemy's superior system of espial. It is my incapacity which has brought us to the brink of destruction on which we all stand. I lament your probable fate, and these poor people's, from my soul. But for myself, I was prepared, as an adventurer ought, from the first to die like other men, whom the world agree to admire. I do not, however, relinquish hope, nor shall I seek death, or desist from exerting every faculty to recall that fortune which has miraculously favoured us till now. You see they have only to close in and cut us to pieces. It would be absurd to face such myriads in the open field. I am ignorant of fortification, with the exception of what a boy learns casually in reading the Roman history. Yet such inadequate knowledge may prove better than none at all. Let us try. Officers and men, set to work: dig a ditch round the camp, throw up a parapet with the loose earth, and raise a palisade above it. Bethel, you command the reserve; take post in that mango grove, which will cover our rear, protecting the stores, baggage, and sumpter cattle. De Sylva, dispose of your guns on the flanks and front, where embrasures shall be made for them. De Jungle, take charge of the infantry, place them behind the breastwork, to fire on any attacking parties. We must finish our works during the night and prepare to receive the enemy by day-break.

Podalirius reached his destination, on the side of the ravine, by midnight, and, unaccountably to him, found it crossed by the enemy, not Meer Khan, but Leeth, the rear of whose force, now lying between it and the camp, might cut off his communication. Four guns were posted near; some foot soldiers, and ten thousand horse were there to oppose him. They seemed inclined, however, to remain on the defensive, until the cannonading began next morning between the main bodies, when the martial spirits of the men caught fire. Some of them hid in the

thickets, among reeds and long grass, at this time very dry, commenced sniping upon a picket of the Pileans. I beg leave to use the only military term of English birth, which means shooting deliberately and singly from cover. The fire was returned, but neither party suffered much till the afternoon. It then happened that the rebels not keeping their match-locks clear of the grass, set fire to it, and the jungle was soon in a blaze. Believing the Europeans at their old work of blowing up, by some diabolical process, the artillery were glad to escape from the vicinity of their ammunition. They ran back, as the flames, crackling and rolling along, spread after them in sight of all, and gave the alarm. Cambridge observing confusion to reign amongst them, sounded to horse, and pushing at them, put the whole to flight. They fled towards Meer Khan's camp at Shahderah, where the battle had been raging since dawn. We must now turn to this great scene of contention. Meer Khan, surprised in the morning at the defences which he then perceived thrown up with extraordinary alacrity, caused the Maharattas to guard two sides, and the inaccessible rear, whilst he and Yacob proceeded to the attack in front. Sixty pieces of cannon covered by cotton-bags, and destined to level the rampart, at the same time that they would rake the camp, were placed to right and left in two divisions. In these batteries stood the Aligholes, under a solemn vow, since coming again in sight of the slayers of their companions, to eat nothing until they had taken ample vengeance. Cavalry behind, ready to follow in the assault, were posted meanwhile out of the line of fire. From the English camp, the Sartorian guns rent many bags at first, and sent their contents about, like drifting snow; but they were soon dismounted. In the centre, the parapet with its massy stakes, flew like unwieldy grape-shot among the constructors whom it ceased to protect. A wide breach now yawned in the middle, and forth came the storming party to mount it. No sooner did they appear, than the whole of the sixty cannon covering them began to thunder, raise dust, and make trees crash, within the defended space. De Jungle, mindful of the melon field, shrunk not from the defence, while a breast-work lasted behind which to ensconce his men. Making his warriors lie down at length, he directed their fire on the flank of the assailants. These, however, seeing the match-locks first protruded through the palisade, threw themselves flat on the ground, and thereby escaped most of the balls. Having thus drawn the fire of the defenders, the Aligholes, once more on their feet, rushed forward furiously, and entered the Camp, with yells heard above the pealing of the batteries. Brave as were the Betulians when entrenched, and the rest while only shot at from a distance, the Pretorians, Sartorians, and all, on seeing drawn swords approaching their throats, dropped their banners, and ran like startled mice to seek hiding holes in the mango grove.

The wearied and hungry victors, thinking the day finished, without much enquiry, commenced diligent search for the forty laks of rupees, deputing a few active hands to prepare a suitable number of Michael's draught bullocks for dinner. Meanwhile, the Mogul horse followed in appalling numbers; and such was the inspiring hope of plunder, that Meer Khan's reserve itself, and all the foot, pouring down, broke in thousands over the deserted fortifications. But such irregular zeal is not thought worth notice in victories. Bethel's division, hitherto drawn up outside of the wood, now turned about in dismay, and, in spite of his expressed indignation, took shelter among the trees, which some climbed to conceal themselves, but most crept into the carts, and lay snug amidst sacks and chests. Perceiving the oxen that carried grain, to offer considerable impediment to these fugitives, the Major-General immediately caused the drivers to picket them in a regular line, in the spaces between the trees of the external row, with their heads outward. This rampart of horns, besides looking very formidable, served for a line of demarcation between him and the enemy, who now possessed the rest of the fortified camp. He luckily found time for this arrangement. The strange appearance of European tumbrils having attracted marked attention, they were supposed to contain treasure, and subjected to a minute examination, which occasioned much delay.

Maharaja Sevajee, having a better eye for plunder than his allies, scorned the tumbrils, and had fixed his affections at an early period on the baggage, when he saw it carefully looked after in the wood before the fray. Perceiving nothing to interrupt his now doing business in Mahratta form, he pushed in, sending some *golas*, which we may translate droves, in advance to clear the way. The forecast evinced by the dispositions of Major-General Bethel now became remarkably conspicuous. These bodies of horse, rushing on at full career, and howling to excite terror, stopped close to the mango trees, and discharged their fire-arms. But, being pious Hindoos, they took religious care to fire over the living rampart of incarnate deities that guarded the spoil. The balls, in consequence, hurt only the stems of the trees, without alarming the warriors ensconced in their foliage or couched at their roots. None choosing as yet to make his retreat known, the post remained silent as a churchyard. The genius of the Commander shone anew, and with increased brilliance, when the freebooting hordes, mass on mass, reining up behind the first attacking party, made a vigorous attempt to pierce his defences. The bullocks, shewing no regard for their worshippers, threatened to gore the chargers, all ridden by their proprietors, as, snorting and tossing their horns, they repelled the intruders with admirable spirit. Such was the inspiring effect of this repulse of the enemy by the gallant file of oxen, that every trunk, every branch of the

trees, every cart and sack of grain, appeared instinct with human valour, vomiting fire and projecting bullets on such wide-spread multitudes that all told. The increasing rattle of the Flaminian matchlocks, now resembling modern file-firing, now swelling into loud peals like volleys, restored the lost courage of the cowering legionaries, who, prevented from continuing their flight by the impossibility of leaping over the palisades, had hitherto sat in safety, holding their horses between them and the hostile missiles. Mounting once more, and looking fierce as ever, they became exceedingly bold on seeing swarm on swarm of the Maharattas reel, turn, and gallop away beyond the range of their invincible brethren in arms.

Dalbracken, rejoiced to perceive that most of his heroes had retained, or forgot to throw away, the swords girt to their sides, at this time addressed his Generals who had contrived to join him.—“If it were not dastardly,” cried he, “even in this extremity, I could at least revenge our disgrace, by cutting Meer Khan and his small party to pieces. His army has left him to finish us; and we might attack his head-quarters with the fearful odds of ten to one against him.”—“Yes,” replied Michael, climbing into an empty saddle, and preparing to charge.—“But,” observed De Jungle, “the artillery are still at their guns, and would open on us.”—“By Heaven, Jack, you speak truth,” rejoined the Commander-in-Chief, “so we may fall on them without reproach. Ho! sepoys, victory! victory yet!—Infantry, make haste; level the defences there; fill the ditch.—Horsemen, forward, march!” Taken by surprise, the men at the guns, believing their work over, and all their enemies put to flight, except some distant sharp-shooters, were not ready; and, firing too late, missed the English, and threw shot among their allies the Maharattas. Meer Khan, unable to oppose this unforeseen irruption of revived fugitives, attempted to effect a junction with his forces in the captured intrenchments, but his column was cut in two. He escaped with one part of it, and reached the camp; while his generals and staff were surrounded and taken with the other, except a very important individual, who, escorted by a squadron, made a vigorous effort to follow his principal. Dalbracken, recognizing in this person the features, vividly impressed on his mind, of Yacoob ben Leeth, overtook him, and struck the fierce Tartar so vigorously on the head, that he fell from his horse, and was seized. General de Sylva, to whom small wits were wont to deny skill in horsemanship, kept in the van during this brilliant charge; and so soon as the rout of the cavalry and infantry became certain, he resolved to wash out the disgrace of losing his own guns by taking those of the enemy. Off he scampered, accordingly, with a party of the Pretorian horse to the rear of the battery, where, meeting with no resistance, his warriors had only to sabre about a thousand cannoneers, who, in observance of an irrational



point of honour which still prevails amongst Indian soldiers of that class, insisted on dying at their guns. The intrepid victor, trotting along the line, cheered by the captors of sixty pieces of artillery shouted in return, "Very well!" The day, however, was not won yet. Meer Khan was still at the head of forty thousand men.

The matchlock-men of the grove having now leisure to look about them, all their faces were seen of a sudden turned to the road from the famous ravine, on which approaching clouds of dust rose, whirling in the air and darkening the horizon. Loud cheers rang from the tops of the mango trees, and repeated cries of the "Moon!—the broken hat!—they pursue, they pursue!" Both armies immediately perceived that Cambridge and Steelbow were impelling a stream of terrified fugitives on men who had lost confidence themselves. Nothing is so instantly contagious as fear. In a moment, Moguls, Maharattas, every portion of Meer Khan's army, fled to all points of the compass like a flock of vultures scattered by the *andy* or Eastern whirlwind.

The only enemies now remaining on the field were the Aliholes, who stormed and took the entrenched camp. These reckless soldiers having accomplished their vow, seemed to think no more required to ensure triumph. They had, after moderate attention to plunder, set about repairing the consequences of a long fast, and were tugging away at the half-boiled flesh of Michael's bullocks, the reeking hides of which, extended on spears, sheltered them from the sun, when their friends departed in haste. An unexpected resurrection of departed, though not dead, warriors was destined presently to disturb this social meal.

Betulians and Sartorians, creeping gradually together when danger vanished, recovered their relinquished arms and banners, which nobody had lifted from the ground, and rushing heroically on the eating and unarmed storming-party, left not one of them alive to tell tales.

Dalbracken, yet standing on the field of battle, where not an enemy remained to face him, was about to run forward and receive the Podalirian and Pilean Chiefs, when he felt his knees embraced by a man lying trembling at his feet. "Do not kill me! Do not kill me! this poor slave is descended of the Prophet, and very devout."—"Frog, sir, who are you? and what is the matter with you?" demanded the General. "Ah! I have nothing to do with the Nabob there, who was going to behead your Highness—no, no, not I; this poor creature is the enemy of your Highness's enemy, for Prince Morad murdered my father and mother's son, and spoiled us of our wealth, though Syuds."—"Ha! old acquaintance, I remember the place that I had in your prayers,—Go to your master and assure him, that I will presently have him properly accommodated, and you too. Meanwhile, stay with the guard, and no person shall harm a hair

of your head." "But," continued he, recollecting himself, "Is my friend Azim Khan here?" The youth, bleeding at two places from sabre cuts, on hearing that he was recollected, stepped from among the captives, with the air of one confident of a good reception. The conqueror and he embracing and embraced, as equals salute in the East, Dalbracken led the Mogul to his English friends, introducing him suitably to all, but particularly to Podalirius, who shewed his attention by alleviating the pain and healing the young man's wounds. Azim Khan lived in tents pitched for him at head-quarters, while the once mighty Yacoo ben Leeth, and his remaining household, were equally well lodged at a distance, Dalbracken's delicacy forbearing to see the man in his fallen state.

No obstacle now remaining, the victorious legions advanced straight to Ahmedabad. There, on the 25th of that month, was the politic prediction of the Lady Jehanara fulfilled. Banners, no longer ridiculous or fantastical, even to the eyes that laughed on their birth, waved proudly over the different quarters of the city, as the cannon of vanquished enemies proclaimed with thundering voices the subjection of Guzerat to the Vicegerent's authority.

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JAMES.—Now, could De Jungle say anything but the plain truth about this disturbance? It was a riot between two mobs, not a battle. Each army ran away and chased the other in turn, but they never fought at all. The murder of men who could not resist, was a black burning shame. If a victory was won, the bullocks gained it. Cambridge helped, perhaps, though he had been sent on other business, and came back when needed quite by chance.

BROWNIE.—Remember, James, what I have told you, and how ignorant you are of glorious war. The battle was a well-contested battle, of which every turn to the ultimate consummation was effected through the foresight and wisdom of the successful commander. It is described in the stereotyped style of heroes, as all battles have hitherto been, in the dispatch of General De Jungle to Mr Guttlethorpe, which, therefore, I refer to in hopes of its silencing your cavils.

To the Honourable JEHOSEPHAT GUTTLETHORPE, Esq.,  
Chief of Surat, and Superintendent-General of English  
Affairs in the Eastern Indies.

"HONOURABLE SIR,—I hasten to inform you of a glorious and decisive victory achieved by the English troops under the

command of His Excellency General Malcolm Dalbracken, over the combined forces of Generals Pin and Leith, and Maharaja Sevajee.

"These Chiefs having successfully eluded the movements of General Dalbracken, for falling upon them singly while they remained separated, after the battle of the Salvo, effected a junction by a series of able manœuvres, and uniting their armies, prepared to attack us on the field of Shahderah, at the head of 150,000 men. Our force, deducting sick and wounded, mustered only 18,943. The Commander-in-Chief, in order to cut off Leeth's rear division, when about to cross the famous Ravine, at the distance of ten miles on our left, detached Lieutenant-General Cambridge with the Podalirian and Pilean legions, to intercept that body, and keep it in check during the night, or until circumstances permitted him to commence aggressive operations. The brilliant and efficient manner in which this service was performed will presently appear.

"Major-General Bethel, with the Flaminian legion commanding the reserve, was placed in an extensive mango grove on our left, containing the whole of the baggage. The Pretorian legion remaining at head-quarters near the Grove, the Sartorians, with their guns, occupied the centre; the Betulians manning the ramparts in front of the enemy's artillery.

"In order to compensate, as much as possible, for great inferiority in numbers, you will observe that his Excellency caused defences, namely, a ditch and palisaded mound of earth, to be thrown up round the whole encampment during the night. At dawn on the morning of the 15th, the rebels opened a heavy cannonade from sixty pieces of ordnance on the English work. Their fire was returned with excellent effect by Major-General de Sylva, at the head of a band mindful of merited renown; and by his indefatigable zeal, resolution, and scientific resources, the batteries of our adversaries were demolished, and silenced on the left. Yet the enemy's superior weight of metal on the right at last prevailing, levelled our rampart, and made a practicable breach at 1 p.m. The Forlorn-Hope of Aligholes, supported by a strong column of Pin's infantry, and one of Leith's horse, advanced to the storm. The Betulians, under Major-General de Jungle, ordered to line the remaining rampart, continued the defence by pouring a galling fire on the flanks of the assailants with an intrepidity worthy of men who had served in the melon field. But the overwhelming numbers of the enemy rendering further resistance hopeless, it was deemed advisable to fall back on the mango grove, in which Major-General Bethel still maintained his position. This gallant officer, availing himself of his knowledge and much original genius in fortification, now fulfilled the Commander-in-Chief's wishes to admiration, in preparing his post to repel an assault,

and become a base whence offensive operations might be conducted.

"Sevajee, pushed forward his Maharatta host, which charging at the gallop, and discharging fire-arms, attempted to penetrate the grove. The fierce marauders, unable to pass the works placed for their reception between the first row of trees, were repulsed with dreadful loss. The havoc among them was caused chiefly by the Flaminian legionaries, who, volunteering without orders to act as sharpshooters in this emergency, had spontaneously mounted the trees and baggage wagons, whence they now opened a terrible fire on the assailing masses. The Maharattas thus driven back, fled in disorder to a distance, but did not yet leave the field.

"His Excellency, next directing part of the rampart to be broken down, led out the Pretorian legion; and, accompanied by Major-General de Sylva, charged the head-quarters of his opponents with a daring rapidity of movement which their artillery could not arrest; and falling upon the division immediately under General Pin, put it to the rout. The Commander-in-Chief next encountering General Leith hand to hand in single combat, severely wounded, and finally captured, that distinguished and formidable Chief.

"Meanwhile, Major-General de Sylva, who had assisted with his wonted gallantry in the overthrow of the cavalry and infantry, proceeded with a portion of the Pretorians to attack the battery, which he carried in a brilliant and sanguinary assault, after every man of the enemy had nobly died on the spot.

"General Pin, by an effort evincing equal boldness and skill, succeeded in effecting his retreat to the entrenched camp, still in possession of his storming-party.

"At this moment the detached legions under Lieutenant-General Cambridge appeared opportunely in sight. This impetuous yet judicious officer having, by energetic measures above praise, attacked and defeated the division which he was sent in quest of, was now descried from the tops of the mango trees with flying banners, in full pursuit of a swarm of terrified fugitives hoping to find refuge in the rebel camp. The whole of the Moguls and Maharattas under Pin, seized with consternation, fled in all directions. The Aligholes alone, scorning to flee, maintained the ground which they had taken up after the storm. Major-General de Jungle, with the Betulian legion, now encountered that redoubted body of warriors with such irresistible valour, that not one of the Pitans survived the onset.

"Thirteen general officers, the whole of the artillery, ammunition stores, and camp equipage of the enemy, remained in our hands.

"The Commander-in-Chief will presently occupy Ahmedabad, and proclaim the reduction of the province of Guzerat to its allegiance."

## CHAPTER XX.

SUCH was the series of victories that terminated in the great and decisive battle of Shaderah, which completed the reduction of a vast province, and extinguished the hopes of the rebels in that quarter. The uninterrupted success of the conqueror is mainly attributable to that intuitive forecast, which dictated the seizure of the treasure. No other measure could have paralyzed the fiery spirit of Morad, whose formidable name alone had often made him resistless at the head of his army. However mortifying the reflection, experience proves too well that soldiers will not fight without pay. The grovelling parsimony of merchants and farmers also sometimes hesitates to give money, though they see it absolutely necessary to put large masses of troops in motion, when the cause of glory demands speedy supplies. A warlike Prince, as we have already recorded, has no doubt a remedy for 'this ignoble spirit among his subjects. But having drained the capital, and gone to the confines of his territory, where little or nothing existed, Akbar the Second found himself subjected entirely to the will of a cautious and plotting brother. Aurungzeb, for himself and his unconscious instrument, resolved to preserve appearances with Shah Jehan, towards whom he still managed to wear the mask of a mediator. Almost confident of success, however, he only waited the result of the last action, to march and dethrone the father, whom he affected to venerate in passive submission to his will. The prospects of the subtle contriver were again suddenly and awfully overcast. His army being by this time fully assembled, and as no person conversant with the politics of the day could deny his share in the rebellion, it seemed possible that despair might now impel him forward to attack the capital. Under this impression, Dara, without losing a moment, threw himself between the rebels and Agra, by moving the Imperial forces into Malwa, and ordering Dalbracken to be ready eventually to advance from the other side upon the enemy. Aurungzeb, though insensible to personal fear, was always timid in political danger, and subject to the greatest perturbation of mind, when, as at present, his scheming unexpectedly miscarried. Like a spider whose retreat is laid open by the tearing of his web, or a tiger detected while watching an opportunity to spring upon his unguarded prey, the Prince seemed cowed in spirit, and forsaken by his wonted sagacity. He had constantly recourse for solace, in all the afflictions of his guilty career, to the pretended ministers of heaven, in whom he devoutly believed. The reverend and accommodating gentlemen, however, though exceedingly lavish in promises of empire and paradise at a future period, unluckily had no authority, it appeared, to draw on their Maker at sight, to meet present

emergencies. With all this dependence on the invisible world, and the presence of a powerful army in this, the Lord of the Deccan tore his hair, cast up his eyes, pulled his beard, prayed, fasted, prayed again, more than five times a day, and slept on the bare ground without a bed. Still no angels descended sword in hand, no earthquakes swallowed up the infidels in arms against him, nor was a single miracle wrought to succour pious ambition in distress. What was little less wonderful or welcome in this predicament, the vanquished and fugitive Meer Khan, not daring to face the infuriated King Akbar, presented himself secretly to his real master. The shrewd common sense of Aurungzeb, confirmed by experience in war, saw immediately that his General, so far from manifesting any deficiency of capacity and courage, had done all that was possible to ensure victory, though those accidents to which armies ever have been, and ever must be liable, to an extent which baffles calculation, led to the terrible reverse. These two eminent persons concurring exactly in sentiments of policy, came now to deliberate gravely on the means of averting peril which threatened them both. They finally agreed that a certain holy man, a great astrologer, a deep intriguer, and a professor of many unknown sciences, called Meer Hadji, should be sent express to negotiate peace with the old Emperor. Meer Khan undertook to act this part. The things which respectively favoured and opposed the object of this variously accomplished person's mission will duly transpire.

Dalbracken's forces, still waiting for instructions from the Vice-governor, were now enjoying peace in Ahmedabad.

The high-descended Gazee-o-Deen, though at first amusing, became ludicrously troublesome. He was a confirmed opium eater, and rendered perhaps by the nervous irritability which the habit brings on, liable to paroxysms of terror at the apprehension of death from nature or violence. Like most orientals who think all Europeans accomplished physicians, he ran from tent to tent asking opinions of his case. Idle young rogues played many practical jokes on the poor man. Pretending to discover a frog in his liver, they made the patient listen until he heard it croaking in the ventuosity of his interior. This caused him to bellow and importune for an exorcist, as he believed the creature to embody an evil spirit. Such freaks, which however did not intermit his ravings for redress of Prince Morad, rendering Gazi a bore, he and his illustrious friend Leeth were shipped off to Surat, with a recommendation to the affectionate attentions of Mr Guttlethorpe, who sent them to Aurungzeb.

After the troops had reposed a short time, the approach of the succours from Moulton was reported. An officer, called Juan Khan, a wealthy landholder in that part of the empire, commanded the party. The heir-apparent, expecting the two armies to co-operate only without coming together, had established no relative rank. An envoy from that personage, however, required the European commander to wait on his master. Dalbracken remarked, that no orders were yet received by him to that effect, though

rather than be the cause of any misunderstanding, he would pay his coadjutor the desired compliment. This point being gained by the negociator, he communicated in a whisper, that knowing of the forty laks of rupees, his Excellency the Nabob Juan Khan did not expect to receive an empty-handed visitor. Disgusted at such an intimation, Dalbracken evaded the demand by regretting his not having had the pleasure of so worthy a gentleman's company at the capture of the treasure, and on other occasions during the campaign. The accomplished agent seeming tacitly to abandon the claim, proceeded to make another proposal, in order, as he said, to leave nothing but agreeable subjects for the great men to converse on at their first meeting. Then he produced a list of forty very rich traitors, who must of course be brought to justice, and their property confiscated. But considering the high rank of his master, and his universally known friendship and interest with the Vicegerent, an equal division of the proceeds of forfeiture between the Chiefs of the two hosts was no more than reasonable. To this sordid and flagitious proposition, Dalbracken replied, "I have already given the people an amnesty, and promised to inflict the penalties of martial law on all plunderers whatever. We always keep our word; so it is not in my power to make any exceptions, even to oblige your master." The Envoy shrugged his shoulders. "Though you speak our tongue, my lord, you cannot be of our race. I never got such an answer before. Your lordship is a fit General for the good and just Sultan; may he live! This servant is a poor old man who can negotiate no more on this affair, which the chiefs of the times will arrange in private conference. My lord, shall I take leave?"

Dalbracken was not a little surprised after all to find Juan Khan a robust soldier-looking man, of a handsome person, and plain unaffected manners, who, so far from observing punctilious ceremony, received him cordially at the foot of the ladder, as he descended from his elephant. This Indian nobleman, who had left his paternal estate at the summons of a prince whom he esteemed, appeared one of the best specimens which the Europeans were yet acquainted with of the oriental character. He expressed opinions and sentiments which would have done honour to human nature in any country. The friend of Dara could be no less than what this man seemed. Yet Dalbracken, chiding himself inwardly for harbouring doubts which he could not remove by reasoning, lamented that a certain stolidity of aspect prevented the good qualities of the mind from shining through the features of his new acquaintance. His early admiration of female beauty first led to this habit of reading countenances with the eyes of imagination, which continued through life to influence his estimation of men. "Darr Beg Khan," said the Moulthanian, "I regard this visit as the highest honour, except the notice of Prince Dara, which I have ever received. I say nothing of your military services, which are the theme of the whole world. But the justice, faith, and honour that distinguish your transactions with all classes, are utterly astonishing to me, who, thank God, have always been considered a virtuous man. Your kindness and

humanity to the helpless poor—the manner in which you have protected their lives and property from the rapacious hands of a soldiery, whom none else can restrain—are what good and wise men should imitate; and if my humble representations avail, you will be held up by the Vicegerent as an example of excellence to the nobles of the empire.” There was enough of truth in this address, and other parts of the conversation, to make the flattery palatable. “My lord, let us retire for a few minutes,” said Dalbracken; and they did so. “Is it possible,” continued he, “that one enthusiastically virtuous and honourable, could dictate what your envoy proposed to me yesterday?”—“He!” answered Juan, “did the fellow ask more of your Lordship than permission for me to pay my respects?” He was then furnished with a brief account of the negotiation opened in his name. “You are aware,” concluded the European, “of the abhorrence in which I hold such acts, as murdering forty citizens of the first respectability under a false pretence, for the vilest and most selfish purpose. I must beg to know who had the audacity to think me capable of joining in the atrocity.”—“I? Did I, Juan Khan, the Vicegerent’s friend, say so to your Highness? God’s oath! The man who told you so is a liar!”—“Let me see the man, if you please.” “Call the faithless slave,” cried the Mussulman, shaking with agitation, which at a distance indicated mingled rage and grief; but Dalbracken imagined that he perceived a fiendish calmness under the surface, while Juan’s eye darting obliquely, watched the expression of his face, like the mouth of a hooded snake when it stands erect, and follows with open jaws the cudgel moved round its head. “Abominable betrayer of thy master!” cried he, when the envoy entered, “confess thy guilt before his Highness.” The poor creature, throwing himself at his master’s feet, begged pardon without hearing what his crime was. “There, my lord, Darr Beg Khan, I hope you are satisfied that Juan Khan is a good man, and the heir-apparent’s friend.”—“Allow me to put a few questions to this gentleman. Sir, I have some right to know who it was that employed you to make an infamous proposal to me. Have the goodness to look me in the face and answer distinctly.”—“I dare not,” said he, retreating towards the interrogator, whom he began to dread as much as his master, “but take unhappy Soogan into the shade of your protection, and I will tell all in your lordship’s own house.” At these words Juan Khan foamed with unfeigned wrath, roaring out “accursed betrayer and forger of calumnies, thou wilt deprive me of friends, and cast thy master beneath the hoofs of Sultan Dara’s elephant; but die like an ungrateful dog as thou art!” Before interference were possible, he shattered the old man’s skull with an iron mace, and laid him dead at Dalbracken’s feet.

This revolting scene made the visitor instantly withdraw, under a strong persuasion that the homicide had been committed for no other end than to suppress secrets with which the man was charged. Azim Khan, however, entertained doubts on the subject. Juan,



it appeared, was a person concerning whom the most respectable persons at the court of Delhi differed widely. He once stood his trial, and was sentenced to death by the Chief-Justice for murdering his neighbour, another zemindar or land-holder, and taking possession of the property. Yet, appealing to the Vicegerent, he satisfactorily proved the deceased to have been a tyrannical oppressor of his cultivators, who unable to obtain justice, as lawyers required it to be purchased, implored Juan Khan to protect them. He granted their petition, and the oppressive landlord lost his life by an accidental shot in making resistance. It appearing further, that the accused and convicted person treated the people under himself with great propriety, and had besides performed many brave exploits against bands of robbers, Dara obtained him a free pardon. He was wont ever since to profess himself a disciple of the heir-apparent, particularly in that great attribute of the Prince's character, redressing the grievances of the poor, whom the laws left at the mercy of the powerful.—“We Moguls, however,” continued Azim Khan, “who hate Pitans in general, think the man carries the honey on his tongue and the sting in his heart.”—“What do you think of his present conduct?” asked Dalbracken.—“Why,” replied the youth, “when two rogues quarrel, you must believe only what you see, and not a word of what either says. The principal is a murderer—enough for him. We know no more, though I dare say his late confidential agent and banker was a knave, who would certainly have profited immensely by the confiscation which he might therefore propose without express orders, knowing that if you consented, so would his master.” Dalbracken, under such circumstances, proposed to recommend this ambiguous character once more to the notice of the Chief-Justice, and refusing to let him return the visit, he persisted against Juan's abject entreaties in holding no intercourse whatever with the murderer.

The order which presently arrived to march against Aurungzeb, leaving the Moultan force in possession of Guzerat, the Europeans proceeded at the head of their legions, expecting to crown their labours on a field more illustrious than they had yet known. Every consideration promised a glorious result, and no prospect could be brighter than now opened to their view. But they were on this occasion doomed to disappointment. Meer Hadji soon reached Delhi, where with the assistance of Roshenara, seconded zealously by her reverend and noble partizans, his really extraordinary acquirements obtained him pre-eminent reputation for knowledge, particularly of the stars. He could not only foretell what was to be, but got supernatural intelligence of things which had happened. By this last faculty alone, he gained an ascendancy over the Harams, the female world of fashion, which, conjoined with absolute dominion over the priesthood, enabled him to rule the city. The palace still held out against his influence while Jehanara remained there. That princess, in the exultation of her triumph after the battle of Shahderah, seeing the enemy at her feet, was far

from desiring vindictive measures. The Hadji making it appear with infinite plausibility and ingenuity that Aurungzeb, so far from rebelling, withheld Morad from taking any part in the war, with one exception already explained, Jehanara consented to admit what she could not really disprove by tangible facts or documents. This concession, however, was to be received as an act of clemency, and on condition that Aurungzeb held himself responsible for his refractory brother who, already deprived of his government, would be exempted from further punishment on renouncing the imperial title. By these means she enjoyed the satisfaction of restoring peace to the country, and domestic harmony in her own family.

The Princess next, with the live eagerness of youth and womanhood, felt an irresistible desire to see with her eyes, as Moslem ladies may, the youthful conqueror in so many battles which had changed the fate of empire, and secured, she well believed, the reversion of the Mogul throne to the beloved brother on whom rested all her hopes of happiness and grandeur in time to come. "Would she have been quite so anxious to look at a young lady equally famous and serviceable to the state?" Perhaps not. Yet if Jehanara be suspected of making a long journey on purpose to see Malcolm Dalbracken, I would vindicate her taste, by admonishing the reader not to laugh or wonder, but to have the gratitude to remember how much he is indebted to me for admitting him behind the scenes. The Princess had no such privilege, any more than the young ladies and old gentlemen of Britain at the present day have, of seeing the realities of recent wars. He may be assured that the battle fields of Guzerat were as other fields of death, and their heroes like other heroes throughout the world. The Junglian style of martial composition being that in which the feats of destruction are usually recorded, the Princess read, lending the hues of her own imagination to the description, admiring and believing, as others are wont. The Maharattas twice vanquished—the annihilation of Baroach—Caliwass—the Ravine—Shahderah—were epic sounds, and glowing images in the mind, which irradiated the name of Darr Beg Khan, and raised him in public estimation to a princely rank, which imperial power might confirm, but could not withhold.

It behoves me here to record, that however much his fancy flew forward, Malcolm's heart still reverted to home: no sooner had his tide of prosperity set in, than he remitted, through the Factory at Surat, the amount of the booty which fell to him, on seizing Morad's treasury at Ahmedabad, for the redemption of the barony of Dalbracken.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

AFTER the conclusion of peace, as recorded in the last chapter, Dalbracken received instructions to canton his army on the tableland of Malwa, and to repair in person to the presence of the Vice-

gerent. He had already passed the forest between the two provinces, which has ever been so pestilential that few travellers dare enter it during the hot or rainy seasons. The Prince's camp being consequently at no great distance, the fortunate General soon came in sight of that moveable city. To him, the view was both novel and striking. The wide extent of the encampment, its spacious streets converging in the centre, innumerable flags streaming over the market-places, and the tents of the nobility, all reflecting the light from an immensity of white surface, which seemed purposely arranged to give majestic effect to the dark red mountain of royal pavilions which they surrounded.

Having announced his approach in the usual way, he was met by an officer, who assigned a place for him to pitch his tents upon, among the nobles, and near head-quarters. The morning levees had been dismissed, and as several hours must elapse before the evening time of audience, he calculated on resting till then. A messenger of rank, however, came immediately to invite him to the private apartments of the Vicegerent.

Dara bore a strong personal resemblance to Morad, which every one observed at the first glance, and never thought of afterwards. "Magnificent," "Just," and "Great," were cognominal of the elder brother; whilst "Handsome," "Brave," and "Dissipated," belonged, by general consent, to the younger. In this, both were so far happy as to gain credit for the qualities which they most esteemed in themselves. Beauty, birth, or rank, is naturally dear to one who would be insignificant without it. But no man possessed of intellectual superiority and innate excellence ever valued distinctions which may or can be the property of a fool. Dara, proud of being a poet and a philosopher, was not vain of ancestry, high station, and a fine person. Yet, thinking that splendour became royalty as hair adorns the head or trees grace a landscape, every thing about him was superb and elegant in an unrivalled degree. The Prince, seated on the floor, leaning on his pillows, and dictating a despatch to his secretary, as Dalbracken was announced, without making him wait, or affecting not to perceive when he entered, rose up and received him with the frank civility of a polished gentleman in private life. After embracing him in the oriental fashion, Dara laid his right hand on the other's head, a formality which at once declares satisfaction and promises patronage. Withdrawing to an adjoining tent, which they had entirely to themselves, the Vicegerent desired his visitor to sit down, and began the conversation in the tone of, what events had in truth made them, intimate acquaintances. The campaign was talked over in a way which pleased both. Facts and results were recapitulated and slightly discussed, without any unprofitable scrutiny into causes. Though he scarcely bestowed a word of direct commendation, the Prince's exact knowledge of every fortunate occurrence could not fail to delight the General, to whose fame it contributed. "I knew your character," said he, "from the first of your proceedings. There was something

that pleased me in the reckless love of martial honour which induced you to challenge Yacob's whole army. One might certainly have doubted the caution of such a madcap. But the energy and patience manifested in organizing the offals of a force, after that fool Dressup's departure, shewed me, that however inexperienced, you were deficient in no qualities essential to a leader of armies. Fortune abundantly confirmed my opinion. For, after all, success is the best, if not the only test of talents in war." He concluded by quoting a Persian verse, a practice in the East no way associated with pedantry, by which men of education and taste are wont to discover one another. Thanks to Bahadur Ally, the European's memory had enough in store to reply to the watchword with good effect. Dara thus discovered, infinitely to his satisfaction, that the General was not less qualified to adorn his court than to vanquish his enemies. Before they parted, "Darr Beg Khan," said he smiling, "I perceive we have made you an orthodox Mussulman, on the excellent authority of my pious brother's intercepted letter. Your autograph, '*Dalbracken*,' is not pronounceable by our readers, so you had better write it as the scribes do. Do not imagine that I care whether your prophet be Jesus or Mahommed. But Islamism is blended with all our official forms, and we cannot violate them without inconvenience. So pray to one God or three, just as you incline, but shave the crown of your head, my friend, and dress exactly like a Mogul, if you would continue the pillar of Dara's cause. Nay, do not laugh at what shields you from bigotry. This conformity with custom and occasional largesses to the priests, would make a known infidel pure; but you are generally thought a Turk or a Mogul, from the whiteness of your face, your name, and learning. The tailor and barber, after such prepossession in your favour, shall gain you admission to all the immunities of a true believer. Having all but completed this sort of apostasy already, by adopting most of the native dress, Dalbracken took his master's advice without hesitation. Yet he never intended, nor was indeed required, to deny the creed in which he had been educated. The example of the imperial family, for several generations, having rendered religious inquisition unfashionable among the great, no loyal subject of Shah Jehan acted so impolitely as to doubt the orthodoxy of the conqueror of Guzerat.

Dara, with so many noble qualities, was not unjustly called an infidel. He could not admit the evidence of any revelation, and consequently rejected the Koran. He acknowledged, however, and paid more honour to the godhead than his revilers; and, being no scoffer, his faith would have escaped animadversion. But the great crime committed by him, equivalent to irreligion in any country, was quarrelling with the priests. Yet the derision with which he met their machinations never extended to religion itself. The call to prayers, though not quite so well obeyed, sounded as regularly in Dara's as in Aurungzeb's camp. But the less solemn devotion of satisfied hearts, which good sense, good nature, and human sym-

pathy in the great may always earn, rose only in the abode of the heir of the Moguls. Every thing visible and audible belonging to the royal household wore an air of gladness. No riot nor turbulent mirth appeared. Music and songs, awakened by secluded women, stole quietly on the ear. The hum of contentment, disturbed occasionally by a laugh or an articulate sound of frolic youth, indicated a happiness pervading all, but partially unexpressed, out of respect to those who bestowed it.

The aspect of this Prince, however, though always noble, was subject to violent changes. No person is permitted to sit in public before any member of the imperial family. Even the heir-apparent stands beside his father's throne. The magnates, drawn up in two confronting rows, have place next the presence in the order of their respective dignities. Behind them, on either side, the gentlemen, and expectants, as they are called, range themselves in similar lines. As the monarch professes to administer justice in the morning to his people, every individual, from the highest to the lowest, is allowed to address him direct, without the intervention of ministers. Dara's decisions, prompt, clear, and rigidly just, were often very characteristic of the man. Disdaining policy and prudence when they required any sacrifice of propriety, and borne impetuously along by right feeling, he could not tolerate the ignoble habits of his grandees.

Take, as an example, the case of a peasant who one day made his way through the crowd, followed by three naked children. "Justice! justice!" cried the man, joining his palms, and pointing them to the throne. "A gentleman of your highness's train has taken the two oxen from my plough to draw his mistress's carriage. Where is my pound of meal? Where is the life of my infants?"—"Which gentleman?" said the Prince. "The people call him Ibrahim Alli Khan, my lord."—"Point him out."—"Protector of the poor! how can this wretched creature point out one gentleman among so many great folks." This attempt to obtain compensation, without incurring the danger of mortally offending a courtier, failing, and it being anticipated that the youth would deny the charge, the plaintiff was obliged to proceed in identifying his person. So he crept up one row of small gentry, and partly down another, when, stopping before that same Ibrahim Alli, he bawled out, "Magnificent Sultan! This is his Honour who robbed the poor slave." The accused was a sprightly character, lately arrived with numerous recommendations from Delhi. Being better acquainted with the art of rising at the Imperial than at the Viceregal court, the youngster still hoped, by a little effrontery, to turn the charge against him to good account. He therefore boldly avowed the seizure of the cattle, hinting that his preferment had been somewhat long postponed, and just appealed to the wisdom of his highness whether a young man of quality, without any post, could possibly support his rank were he to pay for whatever he required. "Sirrah!" replied Dara, regarding him sternly, "thou oughtest to be scourged

from the presence for professing to unite 'quality' with the basest conduct."

The eyes of some of the principal men here, turning upon one another's, indicated remonstrance from these sentiments. The Prince perceiving it, continued with more indignation—"Such an infamous avowal, too, is made in the face of my court by a candidate for nobility! Is there another of you ignorant that, were the highest, the chief of the nobles, to be guilty of so much meanness and oppression, I would cast him down from his dignity to the condition of that wronged peasant? Kings cannot make nobility—I recognize none but those whom God has made great, and their own actions good." Then, to dismiss the cause, he added, "Ibrahim Alli Khan, restore the oxen or pay the man, and take yourself off to the city of Shah Jehan." Worse and worse! It now appeared that the bullocks had since been disposed off to raise money, and the young gentleman's confidence in his high interest caused him impudently to re-urge the necessity of his being provided for. "Having really nothing, your highness knows my inability to pay the man the price of his cattle either."—"Preserve your majestic lordship a thousand and a thousand years!" interjected the plaintiff. "Why, his Honour has more wealth on his back than my fathers and mothers ever had since the world was." Dara, irritated to the utmost by the pertinacity of a youth that he thought so contemptible, rejoined,—“It is true; and I command thee to strip thy oppressor, and enrich thy children with his useless fopperies. Proceed—thou art commanded.” He obeyed, and the work was done. But so inconsistent is human nature under the influence of degrading despotism, that the rabble of his equals, even fellow-sufferers, hooted the poor peasant, and trampled the recompence of his injuries in the dirt. “Beast of the woods! Vile-born labourer, thou hast dared to disgrace a gentleman!”

Another example of severity, equally justifiable and impolitic, which Dalbracken witnessed also, occurred about this time. “Munificent lord, guardian of the oppressed!” cried a decent-looking man. “I come to petition for subsistence to the perishing family of a brother well-known to your highness. Gooroo Das of Agra having been put to death, his wife and children are helpless.”—“Gooroo Das?” enquired the Prince—“the Hindoo poet! How could that harmless man merit capital punishment?” The petitioner stood mute in the supplicating posture. When expressly ordered to give an account of his brother's fate, he implored for permission to be silent on what was irremediable, to avert further calamity, which a disclosure of the truth might bring upon his house. “What!” said the Vicegerent, “is it come to this? Is a subject of Shah Jehan afraid to complain of his relative's murder? Speak aloud, sir—claim your right. Were Dara's head the murderer, you should receive justice from his hand.” Close by the royal seat stood the Prince's maternal uncle, a man of many accomplishments, rather younger than himself. His father was the famous Vizier, to whom the reigning Emperor owed so much at the begin-

ning of his career. During the Saturnalian season, at the vernal equinox, when the Hindoos have a long festival called the Hoolie, the deceased poet had taken the license of that frolicsome period to write a merry lampoon on this nobleman. Poetical satire being a weapon of which his lordship and friends desired a monopoly, he took a barbarous revenge on the unprivileged plebeian by causing him to be ignominiously flogged; and he died of the lacerating wounds.

No-sooner did the facts transpire, than the thunder collected on Dara's brow. "Shahista Khan," cried he, "are you not a cruel dastard, cowering behind the bulwark of your high place, to destroy one feared in the open field, because nature made him greater and nobler than you?" Without betokening any apprehension or submission to rebuke, the culprit retorted in the tone of an injured man. "If the son of Asaph Jah should tamely submit to the derision of a ballad monger, those who owe to him the throne of Timur would not keep it long."—"Reproach from a felon?" replied the Prince, "go instantly from the presence, and hide that blackened countenance from the eyes of honest men." This was sufficiently degrading to a person of such elevated rank; but waving his hand to beckon him away faster than he inclined to go, Dara struck him on the head with a roll of papers, and knocked off the offender's turban. Being in no humour to apologize for what was not intentional, but purely accidental, he allowed his uncle to depart, filled with a deadly purpose of vengeance, which time enabled him to execute.

Dara, on the judgment seat, was awful even to the innocent. Without distorting a feature or a sinew from that grace in which they naturally reposed, his look and action were armed with terror, like the deep swell of a foamless ocean. The fiery vehemence that characterised his indignant reproofs to powerful criminals, carried conviction and dread to the hearts of his auditors. Had the majority, or even a small proportion of them, realized his sublime theory of nobility, he might not have spoken the language of truth and virtue to his own ruin, and vainly for others. Most of the puissant lords who attended him were not of his creation, and happening to be in different ways equally guilty with those whom he occasionally detected, they stood before him like men under fire, seeing their comrades struck down by what might next moment level themselves. Yet the worst of men see something attractive even in the sword of acknowledged justice. The splendour of the Vicegerent's rewards too, went far to counterbalance the repulsive effects of his rigorous punishments. But holding their honours only during good behaviour, the incumbents were by no means satisfied with a tenure which they knew to be null and void if ever examined. Dalbracken, besides, perceived opposite qualities in his master, which he thought not less unfortunate. These were extreme placability and credulity of amendment in perfect knaves. With aversion, amounting to disgust, he saw Juan Khan, after a second trial and condemnation, pardoned and admitted anew to the Viceregal pre-

sence. This man, by multitudinous oaths and documents which he disdained to produce before the chief justice, made out a most plausible story, proving his old servant to have been a traitor in the pay of the rebels, striving to paralyze the measures of the heir-apparent, by sowing dissensions among his friends. The case, therefore, being made to appear one in which political necessity justified a violation of law, Dara interfered to save the murderer.

The evening assembly in the tent, called the private audience, was a very different scene. The principal personage shone there in all the lustre of genius and polished urbanity adorning the highest station. Literature, science, and projects ranging the expanse of possibility, were all discussed with a sportive grace which invited the freest remarks, and allowed every one to appear to advantage in his peculiar element. Some proposed to pour the riches of the world from the bosom of the Indian ocean, by the navigation of the Indus, into the sterile wilds of Cabul, which in their turn were to repay the boon by yielding unbounded wealth. Some changing the course of rivers, promised to convert unpeopled deserts into fruitful regions. Plans lay before him of stupendous arches spanning the widest streams, to bear armies from shore to shore, as if nature had offered no impediment. Forms of sublimity and beauty in architecture, unknown to the East, passed under review as the ornaments of future palaces. Nations of warriors, artists, and mechanics, from distant lands, whose energies sunk under the heat of the plains, entrenched within impassable mountains, rendered impregnable by their own arts, were to advance the civilization of the Mogul Empire, and be its perpetual protection. The more elaborate and systematic plan of education followed in the West, enabled Dalbracken to bear a very conspicuous part among orientals at these meetings. Men of all countries indeed were there. But as he could express scientific truths in the universal language of literature and conversation, he appeared far superior to those who enveloped their ideas in that jargon of technicalities, characteristic of men devoting themselves to single pursuits. Dara was wont to appeal to him on most disputed points, and on such subjects they generally concurred. On the recondite arts of government and polity, however, which had their professors also, the minds of the Briton and the Indian, like a bird of the air and a fish of the sea, could not approximate. The unity of imperial power seemed so beautiful to the Prince's poetical imagination, that the mention of co-ordinate authorities and checks was regarded by him as profanation. He considered the empire an estate which fortune had bestowed on his family. Nothing, he thought, could be so absurd as creating an hereditary aristocracy, in other words, giving away in crown lands the means of paying useful servants and making friends, to raise up diminutive rivals, who having then no inducement to support him or exert themselves, must become enemies or sluggards. "Besides," said he, "who is to satisfy them and their families. Every son wants to be as great as his father. I should expect an order of indepen-



dent lords, to combine and plunder both the King and the people." A right in the common people to legislate, appeared at first too ridiculous for discussion. An eastern sovereign may be supposed to adopt as his own the wisdom of a council, and emanate the same to his loving subjects; but he makes no nice distinction between a right to advise and rebellion. The representative system, when explained, made the popular claims to govern intelligible, though it was pronounced as great folly as the alienation of royal property. "Do not these delegates," said the heir of the great Mogul, "treat those whom they serve like our goldsmiths? That is, help themselves to the precious metal which we give them to work, and make copper trinkets for their employers?" The policy of giving their domains in perpetuity to such nobles as India produced, being at best very doubtful in his opinion also, the European desisted from maintaining the utility of an independent aristocracy on abstract principles. But wondering that the paramount and irresistible power of the people had not been discovered by a man of vigorous and excursive mind, whose chief strength lay in their attachment, he propounded doctrines too extraordinary to his hearers to seem at all dangerous. "Certainly," said Dara, "nothing human could oppose the multitude, if they knew how to combine and direct their force. In the same manner, an irruption of horses and buffaloes on mankind would be overwhelming. The world, however, is governed by intellect, not by sinews; for as the common people manage cattle, so do the more enlightened classes bridle and ride the populace as they please. These riders again, being dependent for existence on the sovereign, he is thus enabled to preserve the whole system in harmony."—"I understand your Highness to allow then that knowledge gives power," replied the European. "Yes."—"And I have heard from the same authority, that a given portion of it displayed by five peasants in the aggregate, is preferable to as much in a single nobleman or gentleman."—"It is so."—"Consequently five of the *ridden* may have, on an average, more of the element of power than one of their *riders*."—"Proceed to your conclusion."—"I would infer," continued Dalbracken, "that though an individual of the higher class in this country is generally wiser than an individual of the lower, the sum of wisdom in the last order might become at least a thousand-fold greater, because its constituent parts are a million times more numerous." Smiling at the success of this Socratic mode of establishing a position, Dara added, "Darr Beg Khan throws a new light into the quarry where I have laboured assiduously so long. I can perceive that it contains moral gunpowder enough to raise or blow up mightier bulwarks of kings than Baroach, yet its charcoal grows green in the wood,—its nitre and sulphur repose in the bowels of the earth. Do they not, my noble logician?"—"The manufacture alluded to will be worthy of a crowned philosopher. I can already see it begun. The schools patronised by your Highness must in time make the peasantry, as rational beings, equal to the nobility."—"Now, my friend, let me

in turn put questions after your fashion. How many hen's eggs may there be in Hindostan?"—"Perhaps a hundred millions."—"What number of these will produce chickens?"—"Probably very few: but each of them might yield one, if the fowl would sit twenty days upon it."—"Very true, and so could every poor labourer be taught politics. But taking things as they are, and assuming probabilities instead of impossibilities, how many days, how many centuries, of incubation will be requisite to hatch a race of starved, cudgelled, and semi-barbarous plebeians into fit legislators?" The Prince had no intention to turn his opponent into ridicule. This illustration of his opinion, however, was eagerly applauded by his courtiers, as an admirable satire upon fantastical notions, which held them to be little better than those whom they flagellated every day. These lofty personages, slaves at Court, and tyrants in their castles, as ignorant of literature and science as the peasants they despised, were superior to them in few essential qualities. Though none of the magnates inherited rank and wealth like feudal lords, they, with some exceptions, belonged to a class from whence nobles were in most instances chosen. Hence the supercilious contempt of the people which they cherished. Stripped of his garments and conventional manners, the proudest of them could scarcely have been distinguished from one of his menials.

All who chose being next permitted to retire, lighter amusements awaited those who remained. The Prince's taste, though too elevated to relish Indian dancing, had not attained that perfection in regard to singing which requires the suppression of sense to give its rapturous effect to sound. On the contrary, he caused the young women, like the male singers at Delhi, to use their minds instead of their heels, and to modulate their soft voices in subservience to the poetry which they chanted. The portly figure and stolid visage of Juan Khan recommended him as strongly to the attention of two favoured bards, as their intimacy with the great man rendered their notice desirable to this conspicuous country gentleman. A piece of ludicrous bombast being sung in a solemn tone, whilst the initiated looked grave, Juan Khan, sitting between the wags, was persuaded by their remarks to one another, that its melting pathos could belong to none but the Prince. He therefore managed to blubber a little at the end of it, bending to the throne and muttering fervid laudation of royal genius. In the course of the evening a superlative ode was chanted, which few men living could produce. From hints similar to the foregoing, a number of equally able and willing judges, bestowing the honours due to it on the Moultan savage, disturbed the serenity of the Court. Juan very composedly owned the impeachment, dreaming the while of a vicereignty for his imputed accomplishments. But a villanous scowl flew, like a wrack of black clouds, over his face when he saw Dara obliged to smile, saying, "Juan Khan, I hope we are mistaken: one who can so well rout armies of robbers and reduce deserts to corn-fields, would be too formidable a character if he wrote such poetry likewise."

## CHAPTER XXII.

NOTHING was now talked of or thought of but the Princess Jehanara, who arrived at last amidst the acclamations of the army and the people of the province. The political importance of this young lady caused much profound and contradictory speculation respecting the object of her visit to Malwa. About a thousand chiefs had their respective news-writers at the Viceregal Court, who scattered the result of eaves-droppings and conjectures daily on the subject over the whole empire. These journalists, though recognised as an inferior order of envoys, are not equal in politeness to their excellencies of Europe, nay, I take them to be rather more impertinent than London editors. Had any royal or noble lady the cholic? down went the symptoms in black and white, with details of the cure to fly to the extremities of the East. They are really a set of unsavoury and scandalous inquisitors into the domestic affairs of the great, far surpassing gentlemen of the press. Not a word spoken, a thing done, a private closet, nor a guest therein, escapes their prying audacity. It is to be hoped, in these days, that English lawyers will discover that "the perfection of human reason" which they administer, subjects the productions of the reed, where no types are used, to the pains and penalties of printing and publishing. An opinion from the bench will do; and why should India, which requires it infinitely more than the mother country, be denied the blessings of the law of libel?

The Princess brought from Delhi what we may call Dalbracken's patent of nobility, elevating him to the Commandery of five thousand horse, the dress of honour with which he was to be publicly invested, and presents of great value bestowed by the Emperor in acknowledgment of his services. The day of the investiture, in the Viceroy's hall, was a proud one for the young European, who from thence belonged to an order ranking next after the imperial family and the great officers of state. Fortune appeared now with all sail set, to be carrying him rapidly to the very haven of his heart's desires. He received the admissible but unusual compliment of being commanded by the daughter of Shah Jehan to attend at her pavilion. The avowed reason for giving him this reception was her father's orders that the conqueror of Guzerat should be particularly honoured when presented with his Majesty's magnificent gifts. Their intrinsic value exceeded twenty thousand pounds sterling, but I can form no estimate of its augmentation in passing through such hands. Whatever the newsmen might allege, however, I have already disclosed the truth, that her highness's sole object in making a

long journey, as in executing the commission which she caused the Emperor to give, was to see the person of a distinguished character, whose career had in an extraordinary degree excited her feelings and curiosity: Nadira, Dara's wife, and her ladies, took also this opportunity of seeing the renowned Darr Beg Khan without being themselves seen by any of his sex. The Vicegerent and his principal nobility occupied the hall; at the farther end of which a curtain concealed the shrine of the assembled beauties. There stood the chamberlain in all the dignity of office, as high priest of the invisible divinity. Dalbracken approached the sanctuary which contained the lofty and beauteous idol of his imagination. Having taken the wise precaution of learning the ceremony accurately before hand, he received the imperial bounty like a thorough bred courtier, without manifesting any unstudied emotion. The subsequent conversation proved more trying. He heard, though supposed not to hear, her sweet voice name his name and extol his acts "by his Majesty's command," while trembling to the heart's core as the fat eunuch repeated the words, and conveyed his humble petition of thanks in reply. Vainly did he search with his eyes likewise for the real presence of her who possessed his mind.

I do not consider myself at liberty to reveal the unexpressed thoughts of the Princess. She had somehow anticipated the sight of a handsome man, but one of a quite different sort. Nadira liked the expression of his countenance. Lady Motee, Jehanara's confident, said his figure was quite to her taste, though his Lordship seemed lean, doubtless from indifferent feeding in those terrible wars. But the cold criticism of her imperial mistress extracted much warmer eulogy.—"What a great brow the man has! and is he not too fair, almost?" observed her Highness, without taking her dark and dewy eyes from the aperture. I need not record the words of the defence in answer to this disparagement. Be it known, nevertheless, that the Pitans being whiter than the Hindoos whom they conquered, and the Moguls, who subdued both, more white than either, a fair complexion was a badge of dignity in India before the reign of Europeans. A full forehead, likewise, from its rarity, is reckoned beautiful, not as indicating wisdom, but because it gives symmetry to the face. Dalbracken, as became the inmate of courts, managed to remain calm exteriorly, whilst his mad aspirations stretched their wildest pinions. Jehanara reserved to the last a question important to the fulfilment of her secret wishes. Alas! the answer to it conjured up one of those impediments to the current of true love which subjected two young persons, so strangely attached and singularly circumstanced, to the fate of its common votaries.—"Nazir," said she, "ask if his Lordship's wives be still in Guzerat?"—"This servant of her Imperial Highness is not married." The Chamberlain stared until he got

a repetition of the reply. The maids of honour rustled away from the curtain tittering, and graver persons seemed, from scarce audible sounds, to have difficulty in suppressing their mirth.—“What can this mean?” thought Dalbracken. With all his wits about him, he would have recollected that Orientals are generally married, by the care of their relatives, before puberty. An adult, therefore, enjoying single blessedness, is very liable to the suspicion of being qualified to guard his neighbour's bed from dishonour. The Princess considered a man's having two or three wives no objection to his taking a fourth. She could have visited them, ay and received any visitor coming in their equipages. But to hold intercourse with a spouseless general was quite impossible. Yet, whatever notions silly girls and underbred people might entertain for a time, in a few days the two Princesses, deploring the lot of one to whom they owed so much, were found in a plot against his celibacy. It was unanimously decided that Dara should offer a virgin of the household in marriage to his General. The alliance was honourable, and promised many advantages. It accorded so little, however, with his father's unforbidden mandate, and his daring pretensions, that he actually felt the proposal as an insult to his ambitious passion. Yet not being mad enough to avow his intentions, he chose to plead the old behests of his father, for declining so flattering a distinction, until the paternal prohibition should be withdrawn. The refusal satisfied the Prince for a season, but the ladies, match-makers and candidates, thought him a very extraordinary person indeed. The most deep-laid design could not have promoted his object better than this apparently untoward accident. Instead of despising him, Jehanara's fancy now exalted the prize into something of too much excellence to be of easy attainment.—“The women of Rome” (meaning the Turkish empire), said she to herself, “are Ionians (Grecians), I have heard, lovely as angels. Perhaps this man cannot love any less fair; and, who knows, might think myself not very beautiful.” In short, each of them, unknown to the other, was very miserable; and I know not what remedy they would have sought or found, had not far different affairs, of great moment, demanded the immediate and undivided attention of both.

The Princess now discovered, when too late, the imprudence which she committed in leaving her father open to the designs of desperate intriguers, whom none but herself could oppose. While the woman reigned in her nature, the directress of the state slumbered. Jehanara was scarcely beyond the gates of the city, when the noted Hadji and Roshenara, mustering anew their discomfited forces, duped, cajoled, over-reached, the absent lady's delegates, and laid siege to the old Emperor. They persuaded him to shew the world that he was still a sovereign, by *acting, for once, independently of Dara, in regard to his own chil-*

dren. They presented a dutiful and earnest petition from Aurungzeb, vouching for Morad's penitence, and one equally full of excellent professions from the contrite youth himself; both praying for his restoration to authority in Guzerat. The fatal document, written, signed, and dispatched, in the course of an hour, passed the Princess on her way from Delhi, by a messenger who had special instructions to deliver it into the hands of Aurungzeb, instead of sending it through the proper channel of the Vicegerent. By this means the rebellious youngster became again a powerful viceroy, repossessed of his province before Dara actually knew of the transaction. This Prince, intending the government of Guzerat for him who had reduced it to allegiance, saw with deep concern those obstacles to his succession, once so effectually removed, again raised up by this unhappy act. He longed for the return of his sister to the capital, to arrest the progress of his enemies in a species of negociation more dismaying than their open hostility. She was commissioned, in the first instance, to obtain the confirmation of Dalbracken's appointment to the viceroyalty of Malwa. It is here to be remarked, that though authorized as Vicegerent to exercise every part of the prerogative, out of a scrupulous delicacy ever observed by him, he did not nominate to any of the great offices, otherwise than in the name of Shah Jehan, and after consulting him.

One of the friends with whom the Prince conversed most frequently on public business, for he neither could nor pretended to be guided by councillors, was Danistmund Khan, a man of talent and extraordinary learning, known to Europeans subsequently as the patron of Francis Bernier. A kind of oriental incarnation of Pomponius Atticus, he esteemed and loved Dara above all men, but considerably less than his own personal comfort. He sighed deeply for his garden and library, devoutly wishing quiet and speedy possession of the throne to him who conferred both, but who perversely appeared bent on putting all to hazard, and prolonging the period of turbulent activity. This nobleman, availing himself of their increasing intimacy, supplied much minute and relevant information, in intreating Dalbracken to employ his influence at the many private interviews which he enjoyed, to persuade Dara, that it behoved him to make more friends and fewer enemies than hitherto. Though a change of deportment seemed extremely desirable, the point was pronounced too delicate for abrupt introduction. By this time the Prince had fully disclosed his hopes, fears, and future plans to his European General. A permanent peace was not to be expected, nor could any man ensure its continuance a day after the restitution of Morad's power. The main danger however lay, as from the beginning, in Aurungzeb's ascendancy over the priesthood and nobility. The Mahomedan interest was thus alienated from the heir-apparent. He had the good will, but did not look for the effi-

cient support of a degraded people. His best guarantee of success was the affection and declared purpose of a father, still venerated by the army and the empire at large, whilst Shah Jehan remained under the guidance of Jehanara. To maintain his right of inheritance thus sanctioned, he had also a claim peculiarly his own, to the allegiance of the physical strength of the country, consisting of the Hindoos, who outnumbered the Mussulmans in the proportion of ten to one. At the head of these was the great and warlike nation of the Rajpoots, governed by Jeswunt Sing. With this potent chief, however, who faithfully left the European force to its fate in the recent campaign, Dara was now highly displeased. The Maharana, still at Oudypore, did not, after all the late victories, even attempt to fabricate a plausible excuse for his treachery. Dalbracken, to the Vicegerent's surprise, professing to have private business to transact with Jeswunt Sing, requested the honour of being sent on an embassy to demand explanation, and secure the active co-operation of the Rajpoot in future. The proposal being well received, he obtained full powers, and prepared to proceed on his mission.

In giving his final instructions on the subject, Dara observed, "You comprehend it so readily, and espouse the cause so zealously, that I expect to see you rallying my friends as triumphantly as you dispersed my enemies." This, thought the new Ambassador, may serve as an opening to insinuate good advice. So he quoted a distich in praise of enduring what could not be cured, and recommending clemency. A slight misconception in applying the moral, elicited an explanation by no means unfortunate. "Victory," replied the Prince, somewhat warmly in plain prose, "Victory must, shall be, my ladder to the throne, which I cannot ascend until the bigot, the game-cock, and the libertine, are laid prostrate at my feet. But none who follow me have to stain their hands with murder! No, nor to trample the fallen!" The other eagerly disclaimed the suspicion imputed to him. "Justice," continued the Prince, "might be supposed to dictate that towards my enemies which they would certainly do to me. But it yields me no pleasure to inflict pain. My soul revolts from calculating cruelty, and utterly abhors the meanness of taking the life of a fellow-creature when overcome and rendered defenceless. The hypocrite, if taken alive, shall choose between Gualior and banishment to Mecca. Suja, we may trust in his Haram at Raj-mahil, perhaps in his government. The boy, Akbar, if he will, shall amuse himself in the wilds of Candahar, hunting men fiercer than his Candesh tigers." This declaration, though implying nothing beyond what he expected, relieved Dalbracken's mind from sundry apprehensions of possible contingencies, which he could not always repress in reading the past history of the Moguls, with whom assassination and massacre appeared among the ordinary engines of state. The

satisfaction visible in his demeanour sensibly affected Dara. The mutual appreciation of one another's sentiments, could not be more happy or complete between two individuals. Dalbracken seized the moment to say, unreservedly what he meant at first. He suggested the expediency of conciliating the nobility, by overlooking faults which could not be amended, rather than unavailingly estrange a class of men more powerful still than the hundred thousand Rajpoots which he hoped to produce in the train of Jeswunt Sing. "My friend," cried the Prince, catching hold of his arm, "See that you touch not the mental leprosy of these men, lest it infect you. Can you, shall I, inhale the fumes of moral corruption without owning disgust? Should acts, degrading and brutal in themselves, and ruinous to the public weal, pass unpunished, because the great are miscreants? No! Dalbracken, as often as a lord exhibits the vices of a slave, I will have him scourged from usurped rank to insignificance! Shall reptiles in soul, who dare not draw a hair from my horse's tail, fearlessly pillage the property, lacerate the bodies, and extinguish the lives of peasants, of men whom God has confided to my protection? You and I can acknowledge no friendship with such beings. Whether the throne or the bier be Dara's fate, let neither of them be supported by felons!" This rejection of his first effort to advise a good Prince, delivered with the rapid and clear elocution peculiar to the man, forced upon the counsellor an impression equally strong, of the truth, justice, and impolicy of what he heard. The accredited minister could only take his leave in silent admiration and regret for the noble infatuation of his master.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

If any one, envious of rising greatness, have read the last chapter, he will doubtless pretend to suspect Dalbracken of being an apt pupil in learning that simulation and dissimulation with which vulgar moralists delight to charge the frequenters of courts. What "private business" could by possibility make him desirous of seeing Jeswunt Sing? It is not supposable that, after receiving the worst treatment from Mr Gnttlethorpe, he should now dream of attempting to make him a *prince*, by pleading the cause of an outcast woman with her brother, the Chief of a race who reckoned her infamous, and themselves dishonoured by her past conduct and present condition. The radical cynic may go so far, indeed, as to call the excuse for asking to be made an ambassador a probationary lie to prove himself qualified for the political line. Gentlemen, as well as ladies, ought assuredly to avoid suspicion on all ordinary occasions.



In this matter, however, candour obliges me to exculpate the envoy, and to take the blame on myself. So many circumstances arose to detain the army at Surat, notwithstanding my eagerness to display it in the field, that I postponed the history of a miraculous occurrence, from time to time, until the event which it caused is just about to ensue. Yet the inquisitive reader must, after all, rest satisfied with a plain statement of facts. For though mystery be very foreign to my nature, I am bound to keep the secrets of the spiritual order which I have the honour of belonging to, and disposed, from kindred sympathy, to respect those of womankind, who are on the whole less clogged with the dross of mortality than the lords of creation.

On the night before the armament set forth in quest of dominion, Dalbracken slept at Mr Guttlethorpe's garden-house, in the room which he had continued to occupy. No human sound disturbed the peaceful mansion. Every inhabitant lay hushed in profound sleep. The jackal, stealing from his native wilderness to venture among the haunts of man in darkness, prowled through the thickets of vine and orange, raising his familiar and unheeded yells. Crickets chirped around in myriads. No nightingale, thrush, or blackbird sung on the moveless branches of the palm-trees. A solitary bird, of the plover kind, whose shrill voice, heard at midnight alike on the desert wold and cultivated field, rose at intervals, as leaping and flying he pursued those insects, for prey, which appear only in the absence of the sun. Amidst such scenery there is no well authenticated instance recorded of any European's seeing an unbodied spirit. Yet in such a place, at such an hour, was Malcolm Dalbracken awakened by an afflation, resembling the breath of a terrestrial being, upon his forehead. Starting, and attempting to rise, he found both arms crossed over his breast, and secured at the wrists by two soft manacles that seemed to tighten in proportion as he resisted. Recognised tones, which he deemed none could imitate, appalled him scarcely the less that they assigned a form of flesh to the apparition. Before being able to articulate a word, he was thus addressed in the native language,—“It is a woman who holds you! Speak not, struggle not, for God's sake, lest the people awake and I lose my good name for your sake and another's! Take this image, of his divine progenitor, with you to the friendly tents of Maharana Jeswunt Sing, Sesoyda, and say to that prince,—‘Receive, O first of the Hindoo race, with relenting affection, a token of homage from the daughter of thy sister, even the guiltless maid who, though of another faith, is of Rama's lineage, and proud of the Rajpoot name.’ Dalbracken! make the soul of that uncle delight in the welfare of Eurasia, by speaking of her good qualities with the tongue of persuasion, when his heart shall be softened. She will thence become a princess, having a principedom to bestow upon him that she loves, in the manner of the Christians. Her lips may not meet the lips of another man. You are wise and comprehend all things. Reposit that which I have said and done in the niche of secrecy, and never,

O youth, do thou draw the veil of concealment from Mr Guttlethorpe's eyes ! May you live and prosper, and become a Chief of the times !" No departing footfall met his ear. But his hands were free, and he rose up staring in vain. Spirit of earth or air, mother or daughter, the mysterious being had vanished. Incredulous of supernatural agency in the small affairs of men, he thought the words of the apparition literally true, and considered himself commissioned by a "woman," who chose that extraordinary time and manner to deliver her message without Guttlethorpe's knowledge. The present, which remained hanging on his arm by a gold chain, was a Medallion of the same metal, representing the mighty Rama on horseback with the sun overhead. The workmanship, evidently European, was superlatively beautiful, and such as no Surujban or child of the sun had ever handled before. The Rajpoots are wont to wear such ornaments of their own rude fabrication, as indicating the martial nobility of their tribe, suspended from the neck, after the fashion of your Barons of Nova Scotia with their hereditary badges. I am aware that nothing in this history will appear so ambiguous to unobservant and unimaginative people, as Dalbracken's behaviour to the fair sex. Erroneously conceiving, on the authority of fictitious writers, that a person can be in love only once, they allow no sincerity to him, who, instead of pining over his early affection, becomes ridiculously attached to a princess whom he has never seen. Without offering any defence, I may account for the fact. The daily repeated injunctions of a parent created in him, at an early age, what we may call an artificial instinct against an equal or inferior marriage, like that which makes Christians recoil from incest. Debarred from sacrificing himself to an idol, adored perhaps the more on that account, he was subsequently driven where fortune presented others to his eyes, while the idolatry remained in his heart. What is more common in human nature than such changes of worship ? Every man capable of loving may be a polytheist in love. An imperial bride again was neither forbidden by mental association with it, nor really comprehended in the parental inhibition. Youth, beauty, love, princely dignity, are talismanic words, awakening kindred images in the mind, which unite as naturally as the seven rays of the sun blend in one beam of light. Imagination, always the chief source of pure passion, is a telescope, enduing the soul with a visual faculty to penetrate curtains, and luxuriate on charms invisible by all the powers of optics. Hence Dalbracken's ambitious fondness for the unseen Jehenara. But not being an attachment produced or confirmed by habit, for which intercourse is essential, I do not vouch that it will outlast a first interview. Various circumstances which may or may not concur hereafter, must transpire to make either party finally pleased with the other. With regard to the Sahibzadee, he was unconscious of having done wrong. One of many who exchanged thoughts with her, playing at compliment and banter in a tone neither serious nor inapplicable, he met the lady half way at her own pastime, and felt that she had

the claims of a boon companion on his good offices. When, therefore, the possibility occurred to him of accomplishing objects which would at once elevate Eurasia to a princess, and serve Dara, he lost no time in soliciting the embassy.

On the last day of his journey, the ambassador was met by the prime minister and a relative of the Maharana's, who conducted him to their capital.

Oudypore is situated within an amphitheatre of hills, on the margin of a magnificent lake which literally washes the walls of the palace that is still inhabited by the descendants of Rama. The expanse of water is studded with many wood-clad islets, lifting their trees and verdure over the gleaming surface. The largest of these, called Jutta Munder, was once the favourite residence of Shah Jehan, who built an elegant structure upon it, in his father's lifetime, which stands to this day. To this beautiful and retired spot the representative of Dara now repaired with his attendants, preparing to appear next day at the Rajpoot court. Before he had proceeded to deliver his credentials, a messenger arrived to announce the addition of Viceroy of Malwa to his titles and dignity, a circumstance which materially influenced the ensuing negotiation.

At the time appointed, Dalbracken, proceeding in his barge to the palace, mounted his state palanquin, and was borne through streets of cavalry to the hall of audience. There a full convocation of Takoors, or Lords, who are hereditary landholders, had been called on purpose to meet him. They sat in two rows, face to face, on a white floor-cloth, each having a shield embossed with moon and stars laid before him, and a sheathed sword deposited by his right knee. Jeswunt, enthroned on velvet cushions, supported by the Rajas of the Sesoyda, Rhator, and Ambeer tribes, terminated the street of princes and nobles. All stood up, as their chief advanced, to embrace the ambassador, who had the honour to hug about twenty more of them in succession. Being at last seated agreeably to the strictest rules of ceremony, no inferior daring to squat down until his betters had set the example, the Maharana began to talk to his martial lords respecting the conqueror of Guzerat, in terms which it would have been very pleasant for him to know of, had he happened to be absent. Many of the party commented in the same tone on particular exploits; and, occasionally, confidential servants behind them spoke aloud in aid of their masters' memories, shewing satisfactorily how widely the fame of Darr Beg Khan was spread amongst this people. "My lords," said the lauded General, "our success might have proved the final settlement of India, instead of being only the reduction of a single province, had the brave Rajpoots arrived to shew us the road to victory." For this compliment he received mute obeisances. Silence ensued, some looks intimating that the grand Prince was expected to reply in words. He began, not to deny, but to recapitulate, his agreement with Dara, protesting that he felt eagerly inclined to serve him. "But," continued he, with extreme gravity, "you know, my lord governor, we act

always with becoming circumspection when about to take the field. How often has want of wisdom, by disregarding an omen, led to the extermination of mighty hosts!" Here he enumerated plenty of instances, and resumed—"Sixty thousand of our warriors were in the saddle; twenty thousand foot stood ready. My chiefs met me in this hall, and we took the pawn (a sacrament), vowing, as wont, to maintain our renown; but when just going to step from the terrace to invade Guzerat, we were arrested by an awful warning. I sneezed very loud!"—"Yes"—"Tis true"—"Oh yes, I heard it!" exclaimed every Takoor, in corroboration, with unaffected solemnity. "After such an indication of the will of Heaven, no glory could await the Rajpoot arms, nor our friends, had we been so infatuated as to join them. My prudent forbearance, therefore, left your lordship, by God's blessing, to achieve a mighty conquest. It is well!" These overpowering reasons for violating a treaty, afforded explanation which the novice in diplomacy, not having yet acquired the appropriate language of decorous ambiguity, contrived to acknowledge by a silent inclination of the head. No further allusion to business took place at this meeting, nor at the visit which Jeswunt paid next day in return. On both occasions, the ambassador exerted his faculties to get some insight into the real character of this singular personage before he should speak to him seriously on the object of his mission. The physiognomy and exterior of the Maharana, without denoting more to any one but a phrenologist, bespoke him unlike ordinary men. His person, tall and muscular, was decorated with a dress of white muslin and a few costly ornaments. Like all the Rajpoots of that day, he wore a red turban, but of a peculiar shape, which seemed chosen to magnify the peculiarity of his head. The high receding forehead, left uncovered, exhibited a long slope, which many folds of cloth prolonged to the occiput, whence a dense cone of the same materials, like a horn, projected in the opposite direction. The calgi or egrette, with its symbol of royalty, shone of course in the proper place. He had a remarkably searching and vivacious eye, which, however, constantly fitted, without shrinking, before the steady look of another person, and could not remain fixed long even on inanimate things. The Takoors, jealous of his acting without their consent, under pretence of dutiful attention, watched the grand Prince so industriously, that to hold secret and direct communication with him seemed nearly impossible. He repeatedly promised a private interview, but, at the appointed hour, uniformly appeared with at least a dozen of his friends. At last, Dalbracken had recourse to the expedient of whispering in his ear, while they embraced, as if asking or praying for the Maharana's health. "I come, commissioned by an invisible being, to deliver a mysterious gift into your own hands, unseen by other eyes, unheard by other ears!" This dark and unfathomable intimation, which luckily was not perceived by the rest of the company, exciting a ferment of curiosity and hope in Jeswunt's mind, had soon the desired effect. Pretending, that very afternoon, to

retire to the haram, he got rid of the vigilant lords, and stole quite unattended into a boat, which conveyed him instantly to the Jutta Munder.

The Ambassador opened the conference with the true story of the apparition. A mystical tone, and the vague phraseology of the East, made it appear undoubtedly a supernatural visitation, in the opinion of the listener, who was not contradicted by the narrator. When the medallion, solemnly displayed, shone before his open mouth, and quivering yet rivetted eyes, Jeswunt ventured, after a pause, to touch it cautiously; then, scrutinizing it minutely, and muttering pious ejaculations, he declared it the work of no human hands.—“I hope he wont suspect the devil,” thought the other.—“Who among Hindoos,” cried the devout Prince, “ever made its equal? Who, in far countries, know the countenance, the dress, nay the minutest ornaments worn by Rama Chandra on earth? Hail Mahadew! it was forged in Swerga! She who brought it to this world is doubtless a Naica,—perhaps a Yaksha. I have often heard that they frequented Guzerat.” Putting the chain at length over his neck, and staring at the image, “it must be sent,” said he, “to make me invulnerable and invincible in battle. Is it not? Tell me!” So saying, he threw his arms and head on Dalbracken’s feet.—“My friend,” replied the latter, “I dare only judge of what the voice uttered to me at the dread hour of midnight. It desired that ‘the guiltless maid,’ of Rama’s lineage, though of another faith, should become a Princess. Does it not occur to you, therefore, that the efficacy of the gift will depend on obedience to the mandate along with which it was sent?” This apposite interrogation caused a sudden revulsion of the Maharana’s mind from superstition to mundane policy.—“How many curtained matrons has your Lordship?” demanded he in reply to the question.—“None,” was the answer; and he added to himself, “confound that eternal query!”—“It is well, my Lord,” cried Jeswunt, seizing his hand, “Heaven certainly intends you to marry my niece, and I cede Soorujpore to you.” A man, miraculously single at years of discretion, who had so bepraised a lady of his own caste, could certainly, thought Jeswunt, have no earthly objection to the match. He went on accordingly, taking acquiescence for granted, setting forth the manifold advantages of the union to both parties. The European, perceiving the Viceroy, not the man, to be husband elect, allowed the Hindoo’s tongue to run its career, and then observed, that until firmly established in his government of Malwa, by Dara’s succession, it would be presumption in him to ask the honour of such an alliance.—“Firmly established?” cried the Prince. “Why not? Who opposes? You will be invested in half a month.” The eagerness of the Maharana, who never, indeed, could boast the cool self-possession of a consummate politician, impelled him to expatiate on the subject until he disclosed his real views.—“Why, with the Rajpoots to back you, your government will be steadfast as Mount Himmalla; and between such friends as you and I shall then be,

what are two laks a year? A word of yours can get me permission to take the purgunnahs in Guzerat, that belonged to my predecessors, and still are properly ours, which may yield three times the sum. Then the rest of the province too; suppose we take it all and go halves?"—"Of that we shall have leisure to think hereafter, Grand Prince. It is a rule with me never to make a promise, nor enter into an engagement, which I am uncertain of being able to fulfil. The foundation of my prosperity must in this case be good faith with Prince Dara, whom I have bound myself to see seated on the throne of his ancestors before I solicit anything from him." Here the Rajpoot, instead of openly condemning this resolution, which he thought a foolish one, shewed considerable address in trying to discredit it by a string of prudential truisms, which Dalbracken could not help approving in the abstract. Mistaking civility and attention for irresolution, or laxity of principle, Jeswunt came fairly to the point.—"Shall you not rule in Malwa, whoever reigns at Delhi? What should we of a different faith care which of these Sultans is made Emperor? The Mussulmans will certainly make Aurungzeb their sovereign, and it behoves not wise men to live in water and war with the alligator." It is remarkable that Dara's impolitic violence was the chief cause of the cautious prudence which now distinguished his accredited minister.—"I perfectly agree with you," said he, "that no Prince should involve his people in quarrels foreign to their interest and welfare."—"How exactly we concur," exclaimed the other.—"But," resumed the Ambassador, "I have no doubt that Aurungzeb's success would ruin us both. As you justly observe, his power is terrible indeed, for it consists of the intolerance and ferocious bigotry of Islamism, which demands no less than the extermination of all human beings who are not of the Mahommedan faith. Would not the reign of one who owed his crown to this fanaticism be characterised by the massacre, pillage, and dethronement of all that is great among the Rajpoots?"—"Mahadew! they are demons. I wish all Mussulmans were swept from the earth! Timur and Baber did just what you mention."—"Now, you who hold so much at stake, tell me, King of the Hindoos, is Aurungzeb less intolerant than they?"—"Who knows what he will do? He is bad, but all of them are bad, all Mussulmans."—"You are too wise to care for a name. Heaven, as your Scriptures say beautifully, has a hundred gates, at which good men of all creeds may enter. Dara proclaims the same sentiment to the whole world, extending the canopy of protection alike to the Idolater, the Deist, the Christian, and the Moslem."—"He is the best of the Princes. But, my friend, the powerful men of his own race desert him; he has few friends, and we should perish in attempting to support him by ourselves."—"Desert Dara? Who desert him but the bigots, who coveting the spoil of temples, and the jewels of violated ladies, now whet their swords, and look on Rajwara as their destined prey? At this moment," proceeded the negociator, "none is so strong as Dara, with the treasure, the armies, and not least, the personal in-

fluence of Shah Jehan, against whom, were he in the field, not a soldier in the empire would draw his sword."—"Ay, my Lord, he is a great monarch, but old and very frail." Dalbracken pursued the argument.—"Let us even suppose the aged Emperor no more: the heir-apparent is already in possession of power. What is to deprive him of it? Nothing but that persecuting bigotry which will, if it can, annihilate him, and Hinduism, and Jeswunt Sing, and Dalbracken, in one breath. Whilst fate at present holds the balance, and the two scales are vibrating, shall we, like madmen, throw our weight into the one whose preponderance will cause our destruction?"—"Ah! that were terrible: then to see my palaces and god-houses plundered, and the women dishonoured! But would he not be kind to those who assisted him, and compassionate, if we submitted early?"—"Do I hear Jeswunt Sing? Does the proud honour of the Chief of Rajpoots stoop to seek safety from the 'compassion' of a persecutor?"—"No, no! I only asked."—"I thought so: but facts have already answered the question. What did Aurungzeb do when he, by treachery, got possession of King Kootub; even a Mussulman's country? What did his favourite General, Meer Khan, in the Carnatic? How did Yacoob ben Leeth seek to gain his favour but by demolishing the images of your divine Hoonaymaun?" The mention of these two men set the Maharaja a spitting, in execration of their acts.—"It was you, too, that chastised the impieties of both. I see you are the decreed friend of the Hindoos. I am become quite of your opinion: but, my friend, you must repeat all these arguments to-morrow before the Takoor. Mann Sing alone is on your side; all the rest want to join your enemy." After giving this important piece of information, from which the negotiator learned to shape his future course, the Prince reverted to an incidental expression that had left a very lively impression on his mind.—"You called me *King of the Hindoos*, just now," said he; "how did you think of the title; does the Vicegerent style me so?"—"Perhaps not at present, though I should not imagine that he will refuse a designation so appropriate, when he is Emperor, to one who shall render him the important services in your power."—"Oh! he is a wise, a just Prince; may he prosper! Darr Beg Khan! our fortunes are now one; I determine to adhere to you. The damsel of Surat wants a husband, you want a wife, what more? The marriage will complete our friendship indissolubly." When this long interview terminated, Dalbracken went immediately to the quarters of the Rhator Chief; who entering fully into his views, they concerted a plan of managing the Sesooya lords. Jeswunt, on his part, retired to ruminate on whether Padshah-i-Hinduon, Padshah-i-Rajaon, or Shah Rana sounded best.

The prospect of this Mahommedan stile of sovereignty, however shadowy, had wonderful effect in reconciling the venal and interested nobles to the cause of the heir-apparent. After much procrastination, during which each man of influence tried to compel the purchase of his concurrence, the terms of the treaty were finally

adjusted. It stipulated that Jeswunt Sing should immediately place himself with eighty thousand horse, twenty thousand foot, and a suitable train of artillery at the disposal of Prince Dara, to serve him until he should be in undisputed possession of the empire. In consideration of such assistance, he was promised the perpetual lieutenancy of Ajmeer, as held by past governors, to him and his heirs, under the style and title of Shah Rana, which was preferred by the wise of the tribe as adding to its dignity, without renouncing the ancient and distinctive appellation of the Sesoyda Princes. These concessions, bestowing nothing of nominal independence, yet flattered the national vanity of all classes, who regarded them as the restitution of a Hindoo kingdom. The Maharaja Mann Sing, and the Raja of Ambeer, affixed their hands and seals to the document. The ambassador estimating pretty correctly the value of an Indian oath, instead of requiring them, agreeably to custom, to attest their sincerity by the water of the Ganges, preferred an appeal to their self-love. Swearing, said he, is proper with ordinary men, but I can trust the honour of a Rajpoot. So they pledged themselves on the hilts of their swords. The great measure on behalf of the heir-apparent was thus triumphantly carried. Jeswunt made several sly attempts to exact a promise for the transfer of certain convenient slices of his neighbour's territory to himself, or what he supposed equivalent, a contract of marriage between her and the ambassador, before he settled the business, so vastly important to Eurasia. The medallion, thought certainly talismanic and universally extolled, increased in value: but in the spirit of his religion, he deemed possession, without fulfilling the conditions on which he received it, sufficient to insure its efficacy. Yielding, however, to sublunary considerations rather than offend a man of such warlike genius, influence, and power, who might easily take by force what he now solicited, the Grand Prince surrendered Surajpore unconditionally to Dalbracken. By doing so, he meant to avoid publicly acknowledging his niece or her claims, and to lay an obligation on the viceroy of Malwa. The cession, however, in this form was not less efficient for the purpose in view. The papers being forwarded to Delhi with a full explanation, an imperial grant was obtained which gave our fortunate youth the proud satisfaction of atoning for all real or imaginary wrongs by directly conferring a principality on the Sahibzadee.

Jeswunt could account for such strangely disinterested conduct only by supposing Dara's power so stable, and Dalbracken's authority so mighty, that kingdoms were playthings in his eyes. Resolving therefore to strengthen his alliance with both, he sent his eldest son to reside at the Vicegerent's court.

Dalbracken now leaving Oudypore, was formally installed in the office of Viceroy of Malwa, after which Prince Dara returned immediately to Delhi.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

THE request of the French merchants to a Prime Minister, "leave us alone," and, they should have added "keep others from molesting us," would seem to comprise the whole duty of legislators. But Solomon never indited a wiser sentence than that "a fool will be meddling." Various and rare talents, of the highest order, are requisite to manage the complex affairs of a civilized people. An incompetent person, raised to power, affects the intelligent part of men, not unlike the celebrated monkey that ascended the roof of a three storey house with a child between his fore paws. Yet the phenomenon is still witnessed occasionally by the best governed nations. Hence, combining what is improperly done and left undone, in the present condition of Europe, I entertain serious doubts whether the makers and administrators of law prevent or inflict most evil. The favoured quarter of the world, the native land of wisdom and science, having such imperfect institutions, we need not wonder that the government of a remote dependency, like India, should be a series of blunders, committed with benevolent intentions, yet in some instances more injurious to the natives than the despotism of semi-barbarians.

Your senators have no knowledge of their oriental fellow-subjects, nor the British people any sympathy with them. But entertaining great dislike to abstraction and generalization, I would rather, if it please the gentle reader, tell him a story or two quite to the point.

Once on a time, a Governor-General ruled over all India, who knew not the language nor the habits of the people, yet he loved the sports of the field in their land. He selected from amongst the disciples of Nimrod a cunning sportsman to guide him wheresoever the game abounded most. It happened on one occasion that the chosen of the Lord-Governor made him traverse the sultry plain bristling with reeds, and the dells of rank grass, and the thickets of the high jungle, and the places where water is found in the wilderness, near which the tiger is often found; but no wild beast arose from his den. Whereupon the chief of power, growing fretful and disappointed, reproached his conductor with the polished edge of delicate insinuation. The lifter of the boar spear, and follower of the hound, delighted in a practical joke. So causing the upholder of the moving seat of Empire, even the elephant, to approach a large tank, he waited the result, determining, since he could not find game, to spoil no sport. "Here! Mr Blank, I see an immense herd of buffaloes, with nothing but their heads above water, when near enough, bid my driver stop till I fire!" Thus whispered his Lordship in eager agitation, cocked both locks of his double-barrel, and,

on the word to stop being given, he laid one of the animals sprawling in the tank. The rest, taking fright at the two successive reports, emerged from the slimy flood, twirled their tails, and rolled their uncouth forms away at a rapid pace. Now the insidious hunter knew well that these were not the wild tenants of the woods, as my lord deemed—but the domestic cattle of the villagers. In consequence, out came the owners to support a common cause, following the great man with loud cries and low prostrations, as they claimed remuneration. "What do the poor men say, Mr Blank?"—"Oh! they make their acknowledgments to your lordship for killing a buffalo."—"Their gratitude for so small a favour pleases me exceedingly!" said the governor. "Pray tell them that I come to this country not only to destroy buffaloes like these, but to rid them of all men and things equally mischievous!"—"Why do you bellow here? the Lord Governor has come to shoot buffaloes, and unless you behave properly, he will shoot you too. Go away!" So spake the interpreter, and my lord standing up in the castle with his hat off, made the petitioners a European bow, exclaiming, "What satisfaction it is to govern this mild and grateful race of men!"—"Curse the stingy old tyrant!" said the villagers to one another, spitting and growling abuse, as they named their ruler.

An act of council could not have furnished a better example of the mutual misunderstanding which too often subsists between the governing and governed.

Now be it known that the slayer of the buffalo was one of the best rulers of the East that ever won her delegated sceptre at Saint James's. Take another individual as a fair average of what the oligarchy of Great Britain, not the company of merchants, inflicts on India. This subordinate chief of many throned powers had just fitted out a great army to co-operate in extirpating certain hordes of systematic freebooters that then infested part of the country. How much he knew of what he was doing came oddly to light. "Now, sir," said the Governor to his Commissary-general, "tell me if I did not object to sign the papers until you pothered me into compliance: and if you did not, consequently, make me let loose those infernal plunderers, which, it is now costing us millions sterling to catch again?"—"Sir?" answered the astonished officer. "Yes; was it any person but you," continued the other, "who teased me over and over again to discharge the *Pindarries* when we had hold of them?"—"You are mistaken, sir," replied the Commissary; "you formerly saved much money, at my suggestion, by dismissing a war-establishment of grain merchants, called *Bunjaras*, who, though the names be somewhat similar, have, I assure you, no connection with our present enemies, the *Pindarries*."

The unsophisticated ignorance which this betokens, may well exempt a man from local prejudice and consequent narrow views. But it makes him a puppet in the hands of those who have the

positive of his negation in its highest perfection. He sees, hears, and decides, with the organs of persons who are by no means necessarily qualified to rule states. Cased in the forms of office, they may go with the regularity of an eight-day clock, but in general, they are just as incapable as it of regulating others at the distance of a thousand miles.

India requires, in every governor, an expanded mind and superior talents. When such endowments concur with local experience, in a servant of the company, putting mere courtiers out of the question, he is decidedly preferable to a European statesman.

So seldom are these qualifications found united with parliamentary interest, that the British satrapy has rarely indeed known the blessing of such domination. After thus impressing you with the difficulties of the undertaking, I shall proceed to give an abstract of Malcolm Dalbracken's civil administration of Malwa. The splendour of his military career has occasioned a pretty close imitation of the leading measures of his vicerealty in modern institutions, perhaps from unacquaintance with his final discoveries, which I have therefore much satisfaction in adding.

After the object of the famous embassy to Oudypore had been accomplished, the Vicegerent proceeded to Delhi, and the Ambassador to Mandoo, the seat of his new government. Receiving full powers to introduce beneficial innovations, the Viceroy determined to supplant the anarchy and corruption which prevailed, by new institutions and the employment of Europeans whose integrity and knowledge would enable him to make the province a model for the future empire of the Moguls under Dara. Retaining supreme military authority, he became president of the Council of which Cambridge and Bethel were declared members. General Steelbow, under the appellation of commander of the forces, as being the highest officer on duty with the army, had also a seat at this board. But more disposed to act than deliberate, he was readily induced to undertake the duties of superintendent of police, which demanded his presence at a distance from the capital. Cambridge, who negotiated this appointment, congratulated his colleagues on having converted a bad Commander-in-Chief into a useful thief-catcher. The hero of the Torn Beaver, however, had one reason for acquiescing, which his acute friend did not perceive at the time.

Major-General John de Jungle was selected to proceed to the place of his childhood and former obscurity, with the treaty of cession confirmed by an Imperial charter, which made Eurasia a princess. His early passion for the young lady naturally broke forth anew on this grand occasion. Elevated in rank, and covered with martial glory, he now felt certain of completing that conquest which his personal attractions, as he thought, had begun under rather unfavourable circumstances. Sorry to leave behind the Melon banner, when told that it would be unsuitable on a civil

mission, he provided a forest of silver sticks, with kettle-drums, and all the gaudy ensigns of Mahomedan nobility, to render his increase in dignity intelligible to the meanest capacity. Steelbow, knowing these pretensions which he derided in comparison with his own, resolved within himself to shew the ex-schoolmaster that an apprenticeship in fighting gave him no chance in competition with an associate of King Charles. "How excessively foolish your learned men sometimes are!" thought he of his superior officers. "There they *fag* at that cursed dull work of thinking and writing, letting me off on full allowances to amuse myself in the fields—and what's d—d strange too, the General or Governor now, and all of them, are so taken up with their business as to forget Miss Guttlethorpe, and twenty thousand a year! I shan't, that's flat! and thank my stars, for they have such a kind of impudence in talking to her, that they beat me hollow, because somehow I am devilish modest before fine ladies." Maturing the germs of the resolution couched in this soliloquy, he set out in his new vocation, pretending to chase malefactors to the very frontier, and at last fairly beyond it. During their separate journeys, both of the swains kept a dozen tailors at work, besides trimming whiskers, adjusting garments, and consulting looking-glasses, in order to add comeliness in perfection to greatness of character. The rivals finally reached Surat amidst deputations, shouting crowds, and the thunder of cannon welcoming their arrival. Nothing checked the overflowing affection of their old friends, but that respect and awe which warlike renown inspires. Yet the humblest of their former acquaintances acknowledged with enthusiasm, that the condescension and affability of the illustrious visitors could not be exceeded. Whilst they continued among the English, many shippies and interlopers waited on them from all quarters, to make interest for introductions to the Governor of Malwa. By these and other means, the civil establishment of the province was in a short time completed.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

THE Viceroy of Malwa in council lost no time in framing his new institutions.

The Mahomedan code being retained, though a foreign one to nine-tenths of the people, manifested his freedom from Western prejudice; and indeed both he and his colleagues believed justly that the good derivable from any law depends little on the letter, but mainly on the spirit with which it is administered. It was a fundamental maxim in forming their system of "civil and criminal justice," to preclude the possibility of an unjust punishment. A magistrate for the trial of criminals, and a judge in civil causes, resided within each district. A superior court of circuit heard appeals, and

decided, in the first instance, capital cases, or those involving property; and a court of final review, resident at Mandala, having legal points attested by the Moslem doctors, passed them. In like manner, the revenue department was managed by collectors, and a board of general supervision. The supreme court, again, with a number of vigilant secretaries, from the presence of office, surveyed the whole, and continued rectifying whatever appeared faulty in the machine of state. Yet, to leave undone, the civil servants, thus prevented by many checks from doing wrong, were further incited to perform their duty well by bestowing on them high rank and salaries comparatively immense.

The great expense thus incurred was partly refunded by the army, now almost useless, of all superfluous allowance known that fighting is the cheapest kind of labour that it requires. India furnished plenty of soldiers at a day's notice. As officers, were the Europeans discontented, few of them, finding the means of retiring, they could scarcely put the government to inconvenience by resigning in disgust. Why then was public treasure in pampering a class of people living in idleness frequently in immoral dissipation? Their pay was accordingly reduced to the lowest scale. Notwithstanding the excellent urged in defence of this measure by gentlemen who did not the military grumbled exceedingly. Such was their ill-humour, numerous contingent disbursements, left to the discretion of committees and individuals of their number, increased fearfully in amount. That love of pillage, though laudable towards an enemy, seemed now unjustifiably directed against their employers. The tactics which they displayed for a time were soon baffled by the General, or, as they called him in disparagement, the Governor. He reinforced the council with an industrious renegade, who went out and executed, in the name of others, measures for defeating the machinations of his deserted comrades. An auditor, also, in the functions of judge, jury, and public prosecutor, got a lucrative opportunity to retrench money from the army, agreeably to his interpretation of the regulations respecting pay. An opportunity, however, occurred, of rewarding those military men who still laboured in a becomingly submissive manner, on the creation of a F

wealth were attested by columns of figures, which the hardest sceptic did not dispute. The military auditor distinguished himself by actually crediting the Government in his account with a saving equal to half the pay of the army. The promised increase of revenue, and the actual reduction of expenditure, were equally satisfactory; yet it appeared possible that the valuable functionaries, whose efficiency produced both, might be over-zealous in the good work. Of this, ocular testimony of the state of the country could afford irrefragable proof to the members of Government. Accordingly, they made progresses in state to the most populous parts, to see things with their own eyes, and hear the truth with their own ears. Crowds met them at every step, who expressed their devotion and gratitude in the most unequivocal terms. Hundreds, nay, thousands, of the upper and educated classes, who came to the different encampments to pay their respects, unanimously praised the new establishments. All the Europeans in office, though beyond the pale of their respective jurisdictions, received also the most flattering attentions. The Viceroy felt the din of adulation everywhere raised around him, associating his name with the felicity of millions, almost too much for sensitive nerves to endure. Returning from these memorable excursions, the triumvirate sent a faithful transcript of their minds, glowing with the success of beneficent schemes, and the public happiness thence produced to the Imperial Court.

Like most men of understanding who have gained battles, Dalbracken held his own martial fame, idolized by others, in secret contempt; but the ability to confer moral enjoyment and physical good on the whole people, of what had been a kingdom, elevated him proudly in his own esteem. This was honest exultation, and he deserved the pleasure for the excellence of his intentions.

The only alloy to so much delightful reflection, proceeded from the discontent of the army; yet he half-convinced himself that his companions in arms murmured unreasonably. His renegade adviser, turning rupees into pounds, shillings, and pence, proved their allowances superior to those of any troops in Europe, but still without conciliating the disaffected. They complained, moreover, of being degraded by the elevation of the civil servants, where no neutral society intervened to soften the disagreeable contrast, or to prevent their daily collision in private life. "Why," said they, "is a gatherer of money, or the keeper of a warehouse, made a greater man, and paid three times more salary, than the commander of a regiment, who, in many instances, might be his father? They were likewise accused by the military of making themselves a privileged order among the natives, who, while their fawning servility and prompt services extended to the menials of men in office, treated powerless individuals with constant incivility and insult. The same spirit of opposition and jealousy declared the army, if required at all, entitled to the most lucrative and honourable remuneration, for devoting themselves to perilous and revolting duty in an ungenial climate. The wisdom of the Government was even questioned in

lavishing so much treasure on civil functionaries. Would three thousand half-crowns a-month make a corrupt person forego a bribe of three hundred thousand? Would abundance of money, which enables a man to hire assistance, induce him to submit to more personal exertion? The corollary, which every one was expected to admit, established the impossibility of purchasing virtue and industry for less money and pleasure than will be gained by the sale of them. But even when they had fretted themselves into a predisponent state of mutiny by these and other considerations, they seemed desirous of augmenting their own incomes without lowering those of their more fortunate countrymen. The Government, therefore, seeing no prospect of support in effecting a saving, hesitated; and the secretaries strongly remonstrated against any change whatever in a system which worked so well.

It was in consequence resolved unanimously to postpone the consideration of the state of the army until the anticipated increase of revenue should be realized.

Reverting to the civil departments, certain exceptions transpired at last, as if on purpose, to prove the rule that the new system was excellent. More and more circumstances came to light of an anomalous kind, by degrees, until the aggregate gave some temporary uneasiness. For example, cultivation was not increasing every where—here and there villages were reported deserted—men, women, and children withdrawing to live under neighbouring despotisms—thieves, and robbers, and beggars, multiplied unaccountably. The gallant Steelbow, who, since returning from Surat under mysterious circumstances, had not revisited his friends, stated in an official letter, spelt by the Adjutant-General, though of his own composition, that to the best of his belief, as superintendent of police, every rogue cut down and buried, sprouted again into a dozen new ones, like the American turnip or onion, called a potato.

But what the Viceroy in council found utterly perplexing, after the arithmetical demonstration of an augmenting revenue, less of it reached the treasury than in the time of his predecessor—nay, less than when the dissolute boy, Prince Morad, governed the province! A minute scrutiny of accounts now took place, by which some remarkable facts were elicited. But as all of these cannot be classified, I will give a specimen only. The purveyors (or commissariat) paid heavily, it appeared, for voluntary labour; and such outlay was satisfactory, as it protected the poor from oppression. However, in turning to the magisterial expositions, much merit and some money were taken for compelling those labourers to volunteer. Then came the collectors, with abatements made in the assessment of districts, in consideration of the loss sustained by the compulsory absence of the volunteers, with oxen and carts, when required to cultivate their own fields. The military charges, too, with all the diligence of the auditor, rose to an amount just equal to that officer's salary, instead of being one half less than formerly. It was true that he retrenched much at the end of the first period on behalf of

his employers ; but he gave it all back at the beginning of the second, in justice to their servants who had fairly earned it. Yet, though the triumvirate saw reason to lament this increase of expenditure, they thought it could never counterbalance the moral felicity and incipient prosperity which the people had evidently derived from the new system, and which must in due time incalculably augment the wealth of the province. Perfection, said they, is unattainable ; let us therefore rejoice in the vast good that has been done, and wait patiently till it produce its natural fruit.

Whilst in the enjoyment of the philosophical consolation inculcated by such a sentiment, they received a letter, by the hands of an imperial messenger, from the Vicegerent. It proved to be in the form of a private communication to the Governor. The Prince seemed strangely to avoid the subject of the beneficial changes in Malwa, till, at the conclusion, he alluded to them in an equivocal way by no means expected. "The bigot," said he of his pious brother, "has not lost the opportunity of forwarding to the presence some hundreds of complaints from the landholders of your province, against what they call the tyranny of the new order of things. Your object, however, is duly appreciated here. The ignorant are ever ungrateful to him who toils for their well-being, because they perceive not that the noisome clouds of their own vices exclude the sun of his benevolence from them." Then followed some Persian poetry to this effect :—"Aaron ool Rushid heard from the lips of his servants that nothing but gladness and tranquillity dwelt under the shade of justice in Bagdad ; when the Caliph went disguised amongst the people, his own eyes detected a thousand crimes."

The members of Government severely felt the disapprobation implied in this notice of their labours by a man of the Prince's superior understanding.—"Tut," cried Cambridge, "the royal author is planning a romance, and taking us for some of his characters ; he finds it necessary for his design, I presume, that we should blunder egregiously."—"It is most ungenerous," said Bethel, "to doubt the report, after we have actually made progresses to ascertain the facts, and stated them on the authority of our personal observation."—"Yet," observed Dalbracken, "we cannot blame the Prince for hearing both sides, since, as I now perceive, there are two."—"Hundreds of complaints, and from whom ? The very men that we believed so happy. It is likewise possible that discoveries of a very different character may be made by us in disguise, from what we saw when parading the country in state." The other two dissented from these opinions, believing their President swayed by his partiality to Dara. Both declared the opinion of their failure to have originated in the artifice of Aurungzeb, who had forged petitions and deluded even his enemies. Deliberating discontentedly and long, all three finally concurred in thinking that the Vicegerent's ungracious surmises would be most effectually refuted by adopting his own suggestion. They accordingly made arrangements for proceeding separately into certain parts of the province, in assumed



characters, and so disguised that they could not possibly be known. The Viceroy resolved, meanwhile, to remain in charge of the government alone. It being determined that no individual should divulge the result of this investigation until the whole of them had completed their adventures, the two councillors stole away from the capital without exciting the smallest suspicion.

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JAMES.—Do they that rule in the Indies at this day, bestow too much of riches and honour on the men of peace?

BROWNIE.—I believe not. All things considered, no class of the East India Company's servants is over-paid. But a numerous proportion of them being *under-paid*, these naturally murmur and envy those who have enough. Hence discontents, though not very recently, have occasionally broken out among the Honourable Company's troops, not unlike what happened in Dalbracken's army.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

BETHEL undertook to enquire into the administration of justice. Having travelled in covered carts, drawn by bullocks to a remote district without a single attendant, he mounted a pony and rode along the highway. He was soon subjected to the inconvenience of this humble equipage, on meeting a great man with his retinue. The Nabob, mounted on a finely caparisoned elephant, preceded by running camels, and men proclaiming his titles, with a troop of horsemen behind him, swept past in full pomp. The poor traveller, to avoid being trod down, took refuge in a ditch, whence lifting up his eyes, he perceived in the person of him enthroned, above the region of dust, one of the scribes belonging to his own office, who received just five and twenty rupees a month for his manual labour. He had recently given the man leave of absence on account of ill health, and the gentleman appeared certainly to have found a magnificent way of mending it. Casting about to get tidings explanatory of this person's splendour, he learnt that the Nabob Burket Ali Khan, son of a poor village schoolmaster, recently purchased a small property in his native place, which he was enlarging with great industry. The boundaries of landed property being everywhere ill defined, the new proprietor managed to extend the circumference of his estate in all directions, until he fairly doubled the

number of superficial acres. The case of one neighbouring landholder, or zumeendar, was thought particularly hard, as the space taken from him included a village. Why did he or any body submit to such spoliation? The Nabob was high in office at Mandoor, in favour with the great lord Beetwul (meaning our traveller), and likely soon to attain more dignity still. Bethel went immediately to this injured man's house. Announcing himself, under a promise of secrecy, as one who having a channel by which he could communicate with the great authorities in the capital, wanted to recommend himself, by making all grievous acts of oppression known, he tried to draw the zumeendar into his views. This country gentleman suspecting treachery, remained long incredulous of the desire of the Government to receive such information. The disguised councillor, however, succeeded at last in gaining the confidence of the landholder, who engaged to follow whatever advice was given him. They set off together, in consequence, to the residence of the judge, forty miles distant, to demand justice in the prescribed manner. When scarcely in sight of the house, they were stopped by one of the official menials, called a Chuprassay, from the badge worn in a belt crossing the body from the right shoulder to the opposite haunch. He demanded their business with all the insolence of his order; and then, on hearing the value of the property at issue, offered to conduct them to the Moon-shee, or native secretary, for a sum of money, which was equal to the amount of his wages for two months. When told that the parties submitted to no exactions unsanctioned by the regulations, the fellow laughed aloud, telling them to go on, and see who would introduce them at a cheaper rate. He knew on the best authority what would happen; for his fraternity, making a common fund of these bribes, or perquisites as they are reckoned, all shared alike. Bethel and his friend, therefore, seeing the impossibility of gaining a hearing otherwise, paid the sum required. They were now ushered into the presence of the native Secretary. But this learned person, on being informed of the case, declared conscientiously, and with sincere fellow-feeling, that he would on no account agitate an affair involving the reputation of any gentleman in office. After a lecture on the impolicy of manifesting a spirit of disaffection to the servants of the State, and pronouncing their attempts hopeless, he dismissed the plaintiffs, having only taken the offering which they presented on first approaching him. A daring effort to obtain an interview with the Judge himself, was defeated by a host of mace-bearers, who beat and hooted the intruders away. Being thus treated, as the zumeendar foretold, and denied justice, they retired to a garden, or rather grove, near the village where their horses had been left. As they sat under the grateful shade of the trees,—“Now,” said Bethel, “since your real grievance must remain unredressed, suppose

we try our luck with a fictitious one?"—"No doubt," replied his confederate with grave simplicity, "much wealth is sometimes got in that way; but one has to bribe so many gentlemen in office, that without interest besides, the thing becomes as dear as if you were to buy it in the market."—"Your account of the trade is rather discouraging," rejoined the other; "but I am bent on speculation." So saying, he made up to their first belted acquaintance, and begged his advice in a case of great hardship. "You see that traveller in the middle of the Tope, who takes such care of a beautiful Persian horse. The rogue purchased that horse of me for a thousand rupees, but seeing my helpless condition, he will neither pay me the price, like an honest man, nor restore the animal." The knowing official eying him sharply, enquired if his friend were the only witness of the transaction. Bethel could place no confidence in his comrade's memory. "Do you recollect whereabouts the sale took place?"—"Hum"—answered the complainant, "I believe it was where the fellow stopped yesterday."—"Hal you mean Puttun, which I know he left this morning?"—"Yes, Puttun—just Puttun."—"Very well, sir, I know some worthy persons who happened to be on the spot at the time, and they would not object to give evidence, if your worship defrayed the usual expenses."—"Do you manage for me if you please, and have the kindness to pay those good men what is reasonable." "How much may the sum total be?"—"Your lordship will, doubtless, not think a hundred rupees more than enough?"—"Here it is, my good friend; pray expedite the matter."

The horse and his owner were detained next day. The plaintiff and his unknown witnesses obtained admittance to the Moonshee. In his apartment a judicial rehearsal followed, in which the persons of the drama swore, and stood cross-questioning so well, that they were pronounced qualified to act their parts before the European Judge. The court being now cleared, the sagacious Secretary, closetted with Bethel, spoke very frankly. "The judge," said he, "being a foreigner, is uniformly guided by my advice. In a case like this he will expect a trifle. I know these witnesses! Are we fools?" concluded the learned man with a smile. In short, he received five hundred rupees. Knowing that his master, an upright man, would decide according to the evidence, the unworthy servant was thus enabled to turn consistent rectitude to the purpose of iniquity, by selling the anticipated decision. The trial came on, the facts were duly established by the depositions. The defendant having nobody to swear for him, trusting too much to his own genius, asserted some palpable falsehoods to fortify the truth, which, as he afterwards prevaricated, gave unnecessary assistance to the prosecutor, who now got possession of the horse.

Bethel, watching the approach of the postman, alight an

English note into 'the bag, which by that means reached the judge, and obtained the writer a secret interview. At their brief conference, measures were resolved on for redressing all the wrongs which the councillor had discovered in the district; when he, like another knight-errant, took to the fields again. The only personal danger which he ever apprehended, was from meeting Steelbow at the head of his armed police. But to guard against such a contingency, the gallant superintendent had been summoned to the capital. However, the explorer of misdemeanours did not now get far into the country before two guardians of the public seized him by the waistband, on a charge of housebreaking, attended with murder, in a village near Mandoo. The prisoner pleading not guilty, submitted so patiently, that the captors offered to release him for ten rupees, being half of what they would get if he were to be hanged. Enraged at his obstinacy in rejecting so lenient an offer, they helped themselves to the whole of his money, secured him with fetters, and set off for the capital by the place where a burglary had really been committed. He determined for the present to let the law take its course. When the thief was tried in regular form, the people who had suffered, shewed extreme acuteness in identifying his person, apparel, and stolen property. Others, influenced by a natural desire to see the policemen rewarded for ferreting out the robber, thought the circumstance of both being travellers, and riding ponies, sufficient proof that the prisoner was the housebreaker, and joined the sufferers in swearing accordingly. Sentence of death was consequently passed, and confirmed by the supreme court of criminal jurisdiction. He begged to be allowed an appeal to the Viceroy in council, but received for answer, that the authorities could not comply with the criminal's request in so plain a case of guilt. Bethel, being now aware that his own laws, framed to render injustice impossible, were no longer to be trifled with, wrote to Dalbracken, for God's sake to interpose immediately, as he expected soon to see the condemned cell opened by his executioner.

Cambridge's task was to enquire into the manner in which the revenue and customs were collected. Like the rest, he encountered many difficulties from a point of honour among the natives to deny, even by protestations and oaths, the giving of bribes. Every one, however, takes the privilege of speaking freely concerning his neighbour's department. The wretched husbandmen, believing no minion of authority within hearing, complained loudly of a system which placed them at the mercy of tyrannical landlords, the new rulers having considered the interests of the two classes the same. This, thought the investigator, is an oversight of ours. The inequality of assessment on the land next attracted his attention. Managing to obtain a night's lodging in the small fort of a landholder, who was reported on the eve of bankruptcy, he found him a communicative person,

unusually open in his disposition, and learnt many important secrets. "I was in debt," said he, "when Darr Beg Khan became our Viceroy. The collector whom he sent to these parts, came himself to the spot, indeed, but he could not measure my fields with his own hands, nor inspect the qualities of the soil with his own eyes. He therefore employed a rapacious set of natives of this country to procure the information on which he acted. My neighbours, who had, like me, five thousand acres of equally good land, found no difficulty in persuading those rogues, by ready money, to charge them for only three thousand acres. They in consequence pay little more than one half of what is exacted from me, who could not raise money for the bribe." Prolonging his stay, and affecting great friendship for this distressed gentleman, Cambridge, to ascertain the truth of his allegations, proposed to lend what was required to make the collector's native officers revise their report. No genius ever appeared more rapidly at the rubbing of a ring, or the beck of a magician, than the relenting mood of the official conclave, when they touched gold. They drew up a humble petition to the collector, which the suffering proprietor had only to sign. Enquiry ensued, doubts arose that these faithful servants had been too zealous for the public good. The surmises of their principal were fully confirmed by the discovery of an important error in the measurement. Deficient and brackish water now appeared also to demand consideration. Finally, a reduction of the assessment took place, pretty well proportioned to the donation. Obtaining introductions from the person whom he had so substantially served, the wandering councillor proceeded from castle to castle (for in India, be it known, then, and even now, every man of any importance lives within fortifications,) until he saw satisfactorily that the case investigated was a fair illustration of prevalent practices. He next transformed himself into a Cashmerian merchant, going through the principal towns with shawls to the capital. Wherever he went in this capacity, the exactions and insults of all, from the best paid to the meanest native in public employment, were almost intolerable. But advised by fellow-sufferers, he learnt the policy of giving immediately any moderate sum demanded, rather than run the hazard of being pillaged of all his cash in a scuffle. At length approaching Mandoo, he reached a place where many roads converge, and found that a multitude of his brother merchants had been stopped there for several days by a mandate from the custom-house. The real object of the gentlemen in office was to raise a sum twice the amount of the authorized duties. But due precautions were taken to screen the extortioners from detection. A paper was exhibited, bearing the collector's signature, showing what ought to be levied; whilst emissaries, going from cart to cart, threw out the terrors of confiscation, unless the owners of the goods consented to pay the officers for forgoing

the right of search. There appeared no anxiety on either side for handling bales: those having smuggled or contraband articles, were exceedingly submissive to authority, but as the poor and honest traders refused to disburse, it was thought that the whole crowd might, like English juries, be brought to unanimity by detention. Cambridge, irritated at seeing how miserably his system worked in so many instances, had little patience remaining, and now roared lustily for an interview with the European collector. The rest derided his request as useless, if granted, because they believed that invisible person to receive the lion's share of plunder. Working his way by force to the residence of the Dewan, or native deputy, the unknown Lieutenant-general sternly demanded by what right he presumed to detain merchants, to the possible ruin of their affairs, and to ask money from them without the sanction of government. Vouchsafing no reply, the gentleman thus addressed, having received permission to repress insolence by slight punishments, ordered the rude interrogator six stripes of the cora-whip. This was beyond endurance, but being unarmed, Cambridge could not make a way for himself to escape by. To the consternation of all beholders, the Cashmerian assumed a pugnacious attitude, never witnessed by them before or since. Lifting clenched fists, and advancing his foot, he struck the Dewan with one hand on the ear, with the other on the stomach. Utterly confounded, and unlearned in the pugilistic art, the deputy-custom-master, extending his arms with outspread fingers, opening his mouth, shutting his eyes, and trusting to Providence, tumbled to the ground before the last blow, like a sack of cotton. The uproar that followed brought out the police, by whom the assailant was immediately secured. Meanwhile the deputy-collector lay motionless, keeping his friends in a state of racking suspense whether to set about crying, that he might see their grief on possibly recovering, or to intrigue forthwith for his office, so likely to become vacant. Being a Hindoo, his spiritual guide, a sort of domestic chaplain, was fortunately at hand, who taking his fallen patron by the nose, howled in his ears, forbidding the departure of the soul, till life actually returned to the body. A charge of assault with intent to assassinate, was now made out against the prisoner. Pinioned and escorted, he had accordingly to proceed on foot to the capital, enveloped in a cloud of witnesses, who were charged with a swearing power, equal to seven years of hard labour on the roads. But Cambridge, already satiated with unwelcome discovery, took measures for getting himself removed from prison on his arrival at Mandoo.

It was now Dalbracken's turn to assume the mask. Strongly suspecting that all was not right in distant parts of the province, from the plight in which his friends came back, he still hoped to find his good city of Mandoo well governed. He chose as the field of observation a serai, caravansary as it is called in

English, or Oriental inn, at which travellers, including merchants from foreign countries and all quarters of India, were lodged (though not fed) at the public expense. Natives of the town also resorted to this place to converse with strangers and to examine their merchandise. With false beard, moustaches, eye-brows, and the dress of a Turk, he was regularly transmitted from the custom-house as a dealer in European trinkets. Two chambers were allotted him by the keeper of the serai, one for a parlour, opening into the square, which is the form of the building, and another behind communicating with it, without light or outlet, destined for the security of property at night. Depositing his heavy baggage there, the chief of Malwa attended by a boy, whom he ventured to trust with his secret, spread his carpet or rug on the terrace outside of his door, and sat down. Presently a number of well dressed persons from Persia, Cabul, Cashmere, Oude, Bengal, besides Malwans, approaching, saluted the new inmate, and seated themselves by him. They begged to know how his worship had fared in coming to Guzerat by sea, and thence to Mandoo. His account of what he had seen was on the whole favourable. As for the sea, it seemed a dreadful and mysterious element which interested them not, but they marvelled how he could come from the far frontiers of Malwa, and yet have no vexatious adventures to record. He received many encouraging intimations to speak out, for with all their faults and follies the present rulers were not inquisitorial or blood-thirsty. No, said a wit, they are tender of heart and affectionate as the partridge, who leaving her callow young to the care of the kites, went to roost on a palm tree. Who ever saw Darr Beg Khan's face administering justice and hearing complaints? asked another person. Who can afford to pay for justice now, when a thousand instead of one individual take fees, and nobody does the work? demanded a third. I believe that to be the case, observed a fourth, because these chiefs, judges, and collectors, do not really receive money at all, but, like fools, resigning wealth and character to venal servants, they allow them to pillage us, and make promises without authority, which their unconscious masters do not always fulfil. Give me the ruler, cried a fifth, who sees one face to face and takes money! I then comprehend what motives he has for giving my cause a patient hearing, and can depend upon him. Yes, echoed several, why should a man be at pains to do others good for nothing? Great diversity of opinion prevailed respecting the ultimate destination of the bribes taken by all underlings, often in the names of their principals. But, enquired the disguised Viceroy, wherefore do you not petition the Government, and make these vile abuses known? If the information so given should not be made use of to put down the crimes, then you might be sure that your rulers were corrupt. Petition! shouted all in chorus; it would cost more in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred to get a petition

aid before any man in power, than the redress of the grievance worth. Besides, the men through whose hands complaints must pass, are either the very offenders complained of, or their hired advocates. So are the expounders of law. Ah! ejaculated a man of the province, I wish we had back Prince Morad, the gallant youth, again! Others, however, denounced him as a childish, ignorant, and often cruel tyrant. What signifies a little bloodshed? rejoined he; the Prince kept the wheel of fortune turning, and every brave spirit might expect 'to see his spoke look upward some day. How is it now? If Darr Beg Khan effected all that he, thank Heaven! only attempts in vain, making the world a stagnant pool, and men biped oxen drawing water from it the whole day to get their food at night, what would be the value of life? If I am to expect nothing beyond the wages of hard labour, or the regular profits of ordinary traffic, I know what I shall be twenty, thirty, or forty years hence, and seeing it not worth troubling myself for, that hope is taken from me which makes men industrious and happy while living, in expectation of becoming great. This speech was highly applauded, and declared worthy of the glorious days when every courageous youth wearing a sword might, in the shaking of society like a basket of apples, happen to get uppermost, and jump from a trooper's saddle into a throne. A plain trader, who did not understand this heroic enthusiasm, took occasion to lament the better times recorded by his father before Shah Jehan's reign, when the caravans of forty-nine merchants being cut off by rebels on the frontier, one fortunate individual got safely to the interior and reaped the profits of all the fifty. Many more expatiated on the blessings of anarchy, with a fullness of its stimulating recollections, seldom equalled in fervour by Eleutherian orators or itinerant preachers in their laudations of liberty and peace. The conversation ceased abruptly on the appearance of the keeper, who, running up to the spot, cautioned them all to put their portable wares into the inner rooms under lock and key. The cause of his alarm, about a dozen of the Viceroy's menial servants, immediately entered the square, all the tenants of which rising up saluted them as they passed. Attracted by the group, the fellows joined it with the most impudent deportment, jostled off the owners, and very deliberately appropriated their carpets to themselves. The Turk, disregarding the respectful behaviour of the rest, kept his seat, and continued smoking in character. "Ha! Roomee," said a mace-bearer, laying hold of his unknown master's wide trousers, "I judge thee a knowing smuggler; didst thou pass the custom-house with a load of shawls in these sacks of thine? Come, long beard! we love not sulkiness; what hast thou brought over the black water for sale?"—"Jewellery of Europe."—"Lug out thy wares, Roomee, we will purchase a few of them." He had purposely chosen this vocation in the belief that no Indian would



buy his articles. Nor was he altogether mistaken. Brooches, rings, breast-pins, were eagerly taken up, and condemned with many scornful jests, as brass trumpery which he had the assurance to call gold. The precious metal vended by western jewellers finds no more favour in eastern eyes at the present day. "There, Roomee, take that rupee for this thing like the sun."—"The price is two gold mohurs," replied the trafficker. "Peace, Rump-in-sacks," rejoined the buyer sternly, recollect whom you deal with! If I tell his Highness of your bringing brass into the market for gold, will he not order thee a whipping?" He effected sundry sales of the same kind, the rogues afterwards taking out the valuable stones, before his face, and generously returning him the despised metal in which they were set. These admirable samples of the appendages of power, treating others in a similar manner, next summoned the keeper of the serai, demanding couches to loll on, and refreshments without delay. The man delicately hinted at the custom of payment before hand, and the time required by the cook to perform his part. There could be nothing ready in less than an hour, except the Turkish gentleman's dinner. The ringleader, catching at this intelligence, said gravely, "See, fellow, that his Honour gets such fare as may not disgrace our country,—the fowl is fat you say?—dress the rice richly too, so richly that the clarified butter shall drop from his worship's fingers in lifting it to his mouth. Have the curry nicely pounded and mixed likewise, and mind you, spare no expense in condiments and seasoning!—But lest you should blunder after all, bring the dishes here when ready, that I may inspect them." It need not be added that the knave and his friends gobbled up every particle of the meal. When they had all dined at the expense of different travellers, the same worthy began another attack. "Gentlemen," said he, wiping the grease from his moustaches, and sitting cross-legged, "it is my duty to mention a breach of good manners which you are committing, I hope, without knowing it. His Highness, I must tell you, is severe, very severe indeed, upon those who shew disrespect to his friends. You do not, surely, expect to have these commodious quarters rent free, without shewing some gratitude. Are you not aware that it is customary to treat the servants of the state to a few gay amusements?" Silence ensued. "Keeper," resumed the spokesman, "make my lord of Room's (Turkey's) compliments to the dancing ladies, and beg the attendance of two sets with their musicians. The noble dealer in steeds, from Cabul, desires to witness the wonderful performance of our mimics, whose fame has spread even to Candahar."—"No! not I," roared the northern boor, "I never heard of them."—"The gore-bellied baboo (or lord) from Bengal, delighting in the feats of tumblers, commands them to appear in his presence. Be quick, Mr Keeper!" The man obeyed after collecting the money, despite of the Afghan's threats, and the

Bengally's cunning evasions. Seated on their couches, the rascals enjoyed the exhibition in the attitude of princes sitting in state. Having slipped an intoxicating drug into the pipe, called a hookah, which every one smoked, they became gradually more turbulent. The evening being sultry, they began to throw off their turbans, an indecorum equal to uncovering the heads in a European.

The untranslatable wit and boisterous laughter passing from mouth to mouth, with the nameless abominations represented by the mimics, made the scene of blackguard revelry complete.

The Viceroy's little confidant, alarmed at his master's predicament in such company, stole off to inform General Cambridge, who instantly sent a guard to bring away the Turk as a State prisoner.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

THE Council now had a meeting, at which each of the members gave a full account of what he saw and ascertained in his disguise. I shall not transcribe their minutes on the deplorable state of the province, nor add comments of my own, which the intelligent reader is by this time qualified to make for himself at leisure. I forbore to encumber prominent circumstances, peculiar to the country, with less important matter, and abuses common to all governments. Cambridge, who formerly believed the newspapers to take no notice of men in authority, but in extolling what virtues they possessed, and supplying all possible deficiencies, was now astonished at not merely their licentiousness, but the rancorous mendacity which distinguished them. The very writer who furnished his daily intelligencer, had been found to send forth many editions of his paper, every one of them differing from another, and nicely adapted to the reading appetite of the customer, who thus enjoyed the felicity of never seeing anything disagreeable. The remedy suggested by the discoverer, for this system of bringing official characters into contempt, was the establishment of a journal which should tell the truth, and have permission to animadvert freely on public measures. Most people he thought would prefer reality and honest opinions to malicious fiction.

The dreadful defects, the mockery of justice, administered by men who, under the guidance of native lawyers, decide according to evidence, in courts where every adviser is venal, and every witness ready to perjure himself for money, made Bethel recommend the substitution of the Indian Juries, called Panjeits, an indigenous institution, which however defective, could not

be so ludicrously yet horribly perverted as their own code had been in his case.

Dalbracken having been ruminating deeply on what transpired in the serai, inclined to reject both of these expedients. "I doubt much," said he, "whether the rude minds that require pointless calumny, slander, and falsehood, for stimulants, would relish truth and reason, any more than a drinker of arrack would a glass of Bourdeaux wine. No, Cambridge, they would neither buy nor read your paper. But how, my dear Bethel, should you expect perjured witnesses to turn out honest jurors? What the Prince hinted to us is all, I fear, perfectly just. The evil lies in the people themselves, who are neither moral, intelligent, nor civilized enough, to reap the benefits which we intended for them. That spirit of anarchy, nearly allied to the demons of war and gambling, which possesses the active part of the population, engenders a contemptuous dislike of the very essence of good government. We must, I fear, turn back."—"But before entering further on the subject of legal reform," said Bethel, "we ought to decide three very important cases of appeal; two from men under sentence of death, and one from a woman who wishes to be burnt alive with the body of her deceased husband."—"Yes," observed Cambridge, "the impudence of the appellants may edify us; they all justify the acts which our code condemns in them as felonies of the deepest dye, on the plea that they seek glory just like us, though by different paths." The Judicial Secretary was then desired to read the petitions, from which extracts will here suffice. The first came from the captain of a gang of Phansigars or Thugs, a class of atrocious highwaymen, who, under the cloak of hospitality or other friendly assistance to travellers, putting them off their guard, slip nooses round their necks and strangle them in order to get possession of their property.

"Like yourselves, illustrious chiefs of battle," said the fellow, "this slave is a soldier, at war with frequenters of public roads and lonely places, who practises strategy to get the enemy into his power, and then dispatches him as the valiant of all nations slay their foes."

The next petition was that of the Priest of Cali, who had been convicted of sacrificing human victims at her shrine. It began—"Honour and praise to the mighty goddess of destruction, on whose altar the exalted rulers of Malwa have immolated thousands and tens of thousands of men to uphold the claims of Dara the Magnificent to the throne of Shah Jehan. This faithful subject of that irradiant monarch of the seven climates, has, by shedding the blood of a single victim in twelve months, propitiated the divinity, whose frown is annihilation, bringing her to spare his Majesty, and breathe her exterminating spirit into the arms of the heroes defending his throne."

The woman bent on concremation with her lord, took higher

ground still, in this strain. "Your Highnesses are candidates, like your petitioner, for that glory attained by the risk or loss of life which makes a name refulgent through ages to come, but this poor believer in the vedas, and in the revelations of holy men of her faith, desires not immortality on earth earned at the expense of others, nor does she seek admittance to heaven selfishly alone; no, she only begs permission to die on the funeral pyre by an act which is to insure her reception to endless beatitude in Swerga, together with the long train of her kindred of past generations, to share the bliss which she will earn for their spirits. This faith is in me, and may that which is in you be tolerated!"

These appeals made Bethel look very grave and uneasy. Cambridge felt inclined to get rid of the difficulties which they presented by laughing aloud. Dalbracken observed, that the logic running through them all was not new to him. He had first heard it in the "Cavern," in favour of burglary and assassination. It clung to his remembrance ever since, unrefuted by any arguments that occurred to him; and he feared that there was no crime which the principles of war would not justify. "Yet two blacks cannot make a white. However bad we may be, the Thug ought to die. The priest, supported by the creed of millions, is scarcely answerable to us for continuing a practice hitherto unchallenged. We may accordingly overlook his past conduct, warning him that he will inevitably suffer for any future offence of the same kind. The suttee, with her retinue of kindred, must find another road to Heaven. Let us forbid the burning of widows, and take the consequences of offending superstition."

The priests, losing emoluments, murmured at the last interdict; but the people acquiesced, and could never be moved against the measure.

Since the days of Montesquieu, it has generally been allowed by the educated and thinking classes of Europeans, that laws must be made, altered, and kept adapted to the condition of men, otherwise they prove effete. Hence the jurisprudence and institutions of England are no more suited to India than the habitments of adults are to inmates of the nursery.

The study of the distinctive character of each of the hundred races and sects composing the population of the East Indies, ought therefore to have preceded legislation in these regions. Unfortunately, ignorance of all but what they saw at home has distinguished most of the makers of laws for the British possessions in the East; and a few others have, with equal narrowness of view, aped the customs of Oriental barbarians. The natives of India, whether Hindoos or Mahommedans, are, in their domestic, local, and national capacities, very different beings. The diversity of opinions among strangers respecting them is traceable to this fact. Better fathers and children are

not found in Europe. They cherish household ties through life; often submitting to the severest privations to obtain the means of comfort to parents and near relatives. Their attachment to the abodes of their infancy is strong and lasting. They uphold, through thick and thin, the interest of the village communities which their families have belonged to, and, in distant countries, receive the inhabitants of them as brothers. But this exemplary regard for all within the domestic and communal circles extends no farther. Like the robber, faithful to his gang, the villager is ready to prey on others without principle or remorse. I once witnessed their veneration for filial piety, and contempt of general humanity, strangely illustrated by the effect of a story which a sepyo told to his comrades in a bivouac.

The narrative bore, that on some occasion the imperial camp was reduced to a state of starvation by the enemy cutting off the supply of provisions, when a family living in one tent had only wherewithal to purchase a single other morsel of food. The son, stealing out with his sword, swore, by the Prophet's soul, that his parents should not want while he could strike a blow to wrest a crumb of bread from another mortal. (Applause.) He walked round the outskirts of the camp, looking in vain for a straggler carrying provisions, or something that would buy them. At last, on coming round near home, he perceived one setting down a bundle, while he dipped a pitcher into a well. Running up to him he was resisted, and in a moment, striking off the man's head, he seized his effects, and hastened home to gladden the hearts of those who gave him life. (Well done the brave youth!) But his mother said, "Ibrahim, dear boy, these are all our own things which the master (her husband) took with him to the market and the well just now: where is he?" Her son had slain and plundered his own father! (Hai! Hai!) Alas! Alas! broke from fifty lips in the most pathetic tones, without the least expression in disapproval of the flagitious intent of murdering any innocent person.

Commendable as their conduct in most things is to relatives and neighbours, the best man amongst them is sadly prone to abuse any confidence reposed in him as a guardian or trustee. Beyond the limits, sufficiently narrow, of his natural affections, the Hindostanee has few virtues. Towards mankind out of his own pale, he entertains not only indifference and jealousy, but hostility, increasing often in proportion to the proximity of the object, and its similarity to himself. Every section of the population distinguished by origin, religion, or sectarian differences of creed, rather than submit to the authority of another sect of their countrymen, would and do call, nay fight, for the establishment of a foreign power to rule over them. This mutual repulsion, the very antagonist of patriotism, is incompatible with national strength, and has ever been a source of weakness fatal to Indian independence. Thus divided and at enmity

among themselves, each ready to pillage or injure the rest, all tribes and castes concur in opposing and hating any government which makes them pay revenue. When unable to resist it without incurring inconvenient penalties, they consider subterfuge, falsehood, fraud, and all the resources of martial strategy, allowable in contending with the tax-gatherer and the judge. The people of India cannot comprehend the motive for respecting abstract truth and justice. The man who damaged the cause of a friend, or favoured an enemy, for the sake of either abstraction, would be loathed as a recreant, or laughed to scorn as a fool. Hence the satisfied contempt with which they welcome the solemnity of British judicature, that makes life and property depend on an oath. The unaccountable importance attached to swearing, is looked on by them as a superstition, which every man of masculine faith may take advantage of to benefit himself, assist his friends, or injure his enemies. A native of India disposes of his oath exactly as an English elector disposes of his vote. The oath-monger, too, like the borough-monger, subjects men to his will, by threatening to use his dreaded power to their detriment if they disobey him. But so intimately associated is dependency and obedience in the minds of the people of Hindostan, that, without being bidden, they invariably, when required to appear in a court of justice, swear truly or falsely, it matters not, in favour of the party whom they fear most. By opposing influence to influence, it is possible to produce an equipoise in their apprehensions of evil, which may induce them to think it safer to tell than suppress the truth. In a case between two villagers, or landholders of equal rank, the same number of swearers might support each in the ordinary forms of procedure, to the perplexity of an honest judge. But men who cower in body and soul to a great person, or commit perjury in a corner to oblige friends, dare not gainsay the voice of the people, which with them, as well as Occidentals, is called the voice of God. The multitude prefer veracity when it does not go against themselves. If a public functionary, therefore, call together the heads of families of a whole village or purgannah, and put such a question to them as the following, it will generally be promptly and conscientiously answered:—"Goordan Das was guardian to Soogan Chund's children, and affirms that he paid their father 5000 rupees for their portion of the village lands twenty years ago, and has been in possession ever since. The children, now grown up, denying that Goordan Das either purchased or paid for their father's land, assert that the guardian has defrauded them of their right. Goordan Das's house having been burnt during the late war, his vouchers, it is deposed, were destroyed, and no documentary evidence exists on either side. Let all who know and believe that Goordan Das has purchased and paid for the land sit still; let all who know and believe that he has defrauded his wards rise up." The

unanimity with which thousands conduct themselves to do justice under such circumstances is imposing. Yet the same men will concur with the same solemnity in maintaining false claims to a foot of ground belonging to another village. The inquisitive and talkative habits of this race, their frequent meetings after the labours of the day, when much free discussion on occurrences in the neighbourhood prevails, qualify them well to decide on local matters of fact. Indeed, no event of consequence among the inhabitants of a district ever remains unknown to the majority of them. They can but will not aid in administering civil and criminal justice. This alone makes the institutions of civilized society inapplicable to such a people. The only evidence which they afford to a judge is that of the consistencies and uniformities of conduct which, like the laws of mortality and population, men observe unknowingly and in spite of themselves. Truth likewise, when long received with marked approbation by the rulers of a country, comes in time, like all commodities agreeable to them, to be supplied in greater quantity. Natives of India seeking redress of grievances, expect it from none but a righteous despot, who, disregarding forms and oaths, to avail himself of superior means, ascertains and does that which is right. Suitors had always more confidence in the Emperor sitting in the Dewan Am, or assembly of the people at Delhi, than in the chief Cazi.

The European Council of Malwa in the seventeenth century came to think like them. It likewise began to see that the system which had been rashly superseded was adapted to the state of social union found in the province.

War, in the opinion of all Hindostanees, continued the only occupation worthy of nobles, and the only ladder by which the able and aspiring of the inferior classes could rise to honour; while the dull and passive mass of the people, with exceedingly little to lose, but animated by the spirit of gambling, looked to anarchy for their best chances of gaining something. In opposition to all these moving powers of society, it was evidently impossible to introduce or uphold civilized institutions with advantage. The cant of corruption poured forth against the Mogul functionaries could no longer be justified. They made money precisely as contractors do in Europe. An efficient man of good character, strictly watched, paid a reasonable sum to the state, provided handsomely for himself out of the revenues, and was wise enough to feed the goose well which laid the golden eggs for both. A judge, qualified by knowledge of the character, manners, and petty history of his district, was required to administer substantial justice, without restriction to procedure. He and his officers took fees—a sort of tribute which power contrives to exact, under some form or other, in all countries. Europeans call these payments bribery. Natives of India at this day believe the charges of attorneys, for them-

selves and counsel, bribes to the court. Neither party is right; but the object which each seeks, namely, to obtain attention to a cause, is more cheaply accomplished on the Oriental than on the Occidental plan. Dalbracken and his colleagues, not conceiving this state of things good, yet finding it the best which men can enjoy till they are capable of virtually administering law themselves, acquiesced in imperfection.

They had visions and vivid ones of what the schoolmaster might achieve in the course of a few generations: but an event of rather an undignified description compels me to drop grave discussion, to relate what broke up the Council at this important sitting.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

WHILE the council was sitting, an increasing tumult had for some time been heard in the street. It by degrees came near the palace, concentrating at last before the gate, and presently the guard was all in confusion. The drummer springing to his instrument, paid the compliment to a general officer, whilst the men turning out hurriedly, at this intimation, were ordered back to their places, by the thundering voice of their Captain, scolding them for receiving a mountebank with such high military honours. Next moment, the athletic form of a trooper flinging open the door, entered the Council Chamber, stamping, roaring, bleeding at the nose, with the clothes torn in several places from his back; and, what attracted most notice in his appearance, the perspiration ran in rills down his face, washing off some sort of paint, and leaving his countenance striped black and white. "Devil take me, but you stare as if I were a wild beast—but I say now—unless you let me take a party (of troops to wit) to fire upon these infernal scoundrels, I'll throw my commission on your table."—"Good Lord!" cried Dalbracken, leading the way to a private room, lest the servants might witness this odd scene,— "It is Steelbow!" Finding his swelling wrath fairly overpowered by the levity of the councillors, the gallant officer declared, that he would convince them how reasonable his request was, by an account of the whole affair.

The hero of the Torn Beaver, it appeared, being told confidentially of the excursions in disguise, determined to make one too. He accordingly put on the uniform of his privates, and coating his skin with shoe blacking, repaired very naturally to the Fencing School, as the best place for acquiring useful knowledge. The figure and air of the Superintendent of Police were



as familiar to all the loose characters in Mundoo, as a parish church to its congregation. Yet, though not concealed for an instant, he might have avoided direct insolence by holding his tongue. But without being able to pronounce a syllable like the natives of the country, or indeed, to twist his inflexible organs into the utterance of anything resembling an Asiatic accent, he affected to converse familiarly with those admiring the exhibitions. This essay of his affording much amusement to a numerous assembly, who pretended to think him a native, he thought the laugh for a long time with him, and not at him. Forward characters, the more impertinent, because they knew him, accusing his countrymen of everything disgraceful, afforded the poor General unlucky opportunities of holding forth as their disinterested advocate. They egged on a pert young coxcomb of rank to shew off the unsuccessful masker with his small wit. "Sure, you cannot be serious," said he; "a brave *Hindostannee* of your noble make must despise those leper-faced strangers, who dare not meet one of us man to man. The mean fellows do all by the hands of our countrymen, and gain petty victories now and then, by monkey tricks and bribes."—"Oh, depend upon it, you are wrong there," replied Steelbow, displaying his 'noble make.' "Not that I know anything particular, as one might say, about the battles of Caliwass and the Salvo, but you never heard of any monkey tricks or bribery at them—did you?"—"No, indeed!" rejoined the wag, "nor of any such battles: allow me to ask when or where they were fought?"—"How confounded ignorant you are! Young man, why don't you read the newspapers?"—"True, sir, I am a simple youth; yet if you mention the victorious Chief's name, I may perhaps recollect his feats."—"Heard you ever of one General Useel Bhow, as ye—that is we—call him?"—"Ha! I do remember his name in the papers. He is called the *Pistolling Coward*, because he ran away from the brave Maharatta whom he impudently challenged, and shot his horse when overtaken in flight." The Major-General's temper had been tried too long, and seeing himself detected, he could not answer this speech with civility. Seizing him by the shoulder, "Go home, little mother's naughtiness," cried Steelbow, "or if you speak another word here,"—what he added was meant to threaten the brat with the appropriate chastisement, which the Scots, less coarsely than the English, call skelping. But the Western phrase, too literally translated into the camp language of India, acquired a signification so insulting, that twenty voices rose in execration, and the young man drew his sword. The European, quite ignorant of the cause, thought this some new attempt to make sport of him, and retaining his sabre in its steel scabbard, struck the hostile weapon into the air like a shuttlecock, and walked out with great dignity. A crowd followed, however, bellowing the most horrible accusa-

tions, and raising a mob, to whom they proclaimed that a reward would be given for his apprehension. In consequence, an attempt was made to catch him, which he frustrated at the expense of his clothes, and kept the aggressors from renewing it with his unsheathed weapon. Hence the uproar which introduced him to the palace, and his high indignation. When the sufferer obtained a full explanation of his sad mistake in translation, and learnt that the people claimed a Saturnalian privilege of using every freedom with a great man detected in disguise, he began to be less bloody-minded. On learning the dolorous adventures of his superiors in office, he became entirely reconciled to his fate, and after retorting some ghastly grins on those whom he found brethren in affliction, consented to be washed and dressed. "In the meantime," said he, "send a message to Jack of the Jungle to come and bring the letter from Surat, that he should have delivered when we returned; and call me Bogtrotter, if I don't make you all laugh as much at him as at anybody here."

When Steelbow came out of the bath, in his own character, De Jungle had arrived with the rueful physiognomy of a discovered traitor. "Come, Jack," cried his late rival in love, "out with it my boy; tell truth at last, and shame the devil!"—"My contumely with Sahibzadee, is the equal of your own, Steelbow; no bigger," replied John in a tone of timid sulkiness. "What do I care? Where's Mother Ludgate's letter to the Governor? that's the first thing." The hero of the Melon banner delivered up the said document, with a denouncement of Steelbow for aiding and abetting, nay demanding its destruction by fire—a fate from which the declarant had preserved it notwithstanding.

How came Lady Ludgate, it may be asked, to reply to the Viceroy of Malwa, whose communication, addressed to another person, related to important business with which her ladyship had no concern whatever? Just, it seems, because she had nothing to do with it. The old gentleman, on hearing incorrect rumours before the intelligence arrived, having indited a proclamation, as Jehoshaphet the First, by the Grace of God, &c., to his loving subjects of Soorujpore, was bitterly disappointed on finding it not required, and the charming princess herself resented the barbarous indifference, or stupid insensibility of Dalbracken, who, instead of coming to throw himself at her feet, connived at the insults of a brace of clowns who presumed to solicit her hand. The fair author of the epistle, therefore, perceiving every member of the family highly displeased with the virtual bestower of the principality, thought the present no bad opportunity of displaying her own literary talents, and taking the chance of awakening tender recollections in the bosom of a prosperous young man. But without further refer-

ence to the authentic narrative of this lady, and the confessions of the parties, I shall endeavour to give a faithful and succinct account of what happened to the two lovers at Surat.

It will be remembered that the visitors were regarded with that reverential awe which is due to martial renown in the Factory. It flattered the Chief and his associates to see men so illustrious eating and drinking like themselves. The coarse remarks, and vulgar behaviour which often passed forth, had the title of "plain soldier-like manners;" and heroes indulged in silly or nonsensical conversation, they supposed to afford examples of that simplicity of character which so frequently distinguishes merit. The Generals, then, not wanting in self-esteem, when thus treated with a reverence which they never hoped to receive from their fellow-creatures, really having all that any person could desire, naturally became good humoured, simpering, jesting, and pawing their words with delighting affability. The ladies partook fully in the admiration of the brave. Fame of whatever kind, the better, is sure to prepossess women in a man's favour. It is quite a mistake to believe that this prepossession away the elective franchise of the female constitution, unerring, voiceless, but generally right-given, which every woman worth having insists on exercising. Eurasia thought of guests great men certainly, but Dalbracken must be still greater. The kiss, that only kiss which she had known from marriage, having hibernated, taken its winter-sleep on her lips during the adventurer's probation, now rose to life under the beams of prosperity, writhing like a beautiful serpent, whose volutes descended into her bosom. Long did she expect a secret message, or a letter entrusted to one of them, thinking the delay in producing it unnecessary and ill-timed. But when it became evident that the gentlemen were come to make love for themselves, she was not slow in assaying their merits by direct test. She despised and loathed the pretensions of both the politic mother and father, however, who could only behold their suitors through the tintured and magnifying lens, common to the young lady to choose one of them. Yet they quarrelled about which of two such excellent candidates was the best. Gattlethorne preferred the gentle blood of his old friend's

able, however willing, ever to give her affections to either of them. As they could say nothing in reply, the conversation dropped, and she congratulated herself on having dismissed her suitors with little trouble. She could not help feeling disappointed and mortified, however, when the lovers appeared at dinner, as if nothing had happened, eating, laughing, and enjoying attentions, without any signs of being heart-broken. Each encouraged by a parent, returned to the charge on every opportunity, apparently thinking an offer of marriage, like an invitation to dine, which though refused one day, will be accepted another. Having now lost all reverence for the heroes, she resumed her levity, and concerted with Lady Ludgate how to make fun of them. The peculiar temperament of the knight's widow rendering her by no means satisfied with escaping this amorous persecution in her own person, she entered eagerly into Eurasia's views. That lady soon becoming the confident of both, assured them that no woman of spirit, particularly a girl of the Sahibzadee's romantic turn, could ever surrender her hand without being implored in love letters and poetry; and if her opinion were asked, she would recommend the addition of a serenade. The Generals being by this time, as known rivals, barely on speaking terms, neither of them knew what advice was given to the other. De Jungle declared himself ready with pen and voice to propitiate the obdurate beauty, and so far as the best tones of the Indian fife, which sounds not unlike an Irish bag-pipe, would go to touch her heart, should be essayed. Steelbow, after prefacing that a little pains at the study of reading and writing would have made him a capital scholar, undertook the composition of a prose epistle. In the singing part of a serenade, he lamented a crack which his voice had sustained in drilling an awkward squad of thick-headed Germans. However, he had a d—d good Dutch song by heart, which he knew for certain once overcame the cruelty of a Burgomaster's daughter and heiress. "But," concluded he pathetically, "a Jew's harp is the only kind of fiddle that I can manage, and the devil himself could not play on it and sing too." His mistress removed the difficulty, by advising him to defer the song till he finished the instrumental music.

Having brought the story thus far, we may appeal to the original documents before Dalbracken. "Birch and gunpowder," cried he, lifting one of the enclosures, after reading the letter, "an odd indorsement in Eurasia's handwriting.—'Tis a copy of verses enclosing a sprig of myrtle. Jack, this must be your sonnet?

Accept, dread wench, the Queen of Beauty's plant !  
It is her flag which I have won for thee ;  
Display it on thy breast, for oh ! I pant  
That heavenly station's commandant to be.

Than urchin's back, new flogged, more red thy lips  
 When op'd to gorge Ambrosial mince pies,  
 They gave my soul the pain of thousand whips  
 Ere I was shot by volley from thine eyes.  
 What though I tusks and snout besides revere,  
 The flagellating Princess bids me pine.  
 In vain the goblet foams with London beer,  
 And youthful pigs await me when I dine :  
 But I will siege her heart with cordon of my moans,  
 And batter till I breach with salvoes of loud groans.

*Fire in the stable and kitchen.*

"Here is a love letter in cipher, I think. *Madam Sobs Eddy, Mi sole outdoors u.* No, it is only a peculiar orthography, which is puzzling, but I can make out the burning thoughts. Steelbow, did you really and truly write all this yourself?"—"Upon my honour I did," was the answer to this grave question. As the foregoing hieroglyphical words will suffice for a specimen of the ex-roughrider's literary talent, his epistle may appear spelt in the vulgar way.

Madam Sahibzadee.—My soul adores you ; by all that's bright, I would not be jockeyed out of a sight of your little finger for a card to the best dinner the Lord Mayor ever gave to his Aldermen, yet I don't care a quid of tobacco for the estate of twenty thousand-a-year you have got, no, nor your pedigree either, from such a long-toothed sire as old Rama, and dams of as good blood as the best Arab ; it is your own points I like ; besides, you are a filly of nice mettle, just rising the age I always wanted a wife at ; by the Lord, I worship you all the same as the Papists pray to the Virgin Mary. Moreover, as my friend King Charles said to a countess we saw at an inn in Flanders, when she shut her chamber door on him at the end of a speech, says he, through the key-hole, O ! daises paw her,—so I say ditto to you. O ! daises paw her ; and if you don't open the door of your heart to me, as the countess did to the king, I will jump over head and ears into the deepest pool of the Taptie, all for true love of you ; so intending to sing to you this evening, I remain your adoring swain,

R. STEELBOW,  
 Major-General on leave.

After receiving these addresses, Eurasia appeared in the wildest flow of spirits, romping and giggling without visible provocation, as she had been wont before the wars began. In vain did Mr Guttlethorpe chide her for disrespect, in words and deeds, to the generals. Each of these, however, flattering himself that he knew better than the Chief whence sprung this effervescent joy, ascribed it to the success of his new mode of attack. On the evening appointed for the serenade, the Sahib-

zadees collected all the ladies at Surat to witness the exhibition. Lady Ludgate having assigned a window on opposite sides of the house to each of the performers, the audience waited impatiently for their appearance. De Jungle began to make the noise by which snake-catchers profess to pipe reptiles from their retreats under ground. Groupes of fair and brown faces crowded to the balconies to gaze on him, until the rival tones of the Jew's harp divided the attention of the spectators. The younger part of them misbehaved on beholding the victor of Caliwass standing in the moonlight, with his open mouth pointed like a cannon at the casement, whilst he fingered the despised instrument. Then followed the mollifying Dutch song, at the highest pitch of his cracked voice, nearly drowning the orient mellifluous of "The Pillow of my Heart," a Hindoo ditty warbled by his rival. But when the malicious females were staring or listening, with stuffed mouths and giggles bursting fitfully through the nostrils, an alarm, perhaps not accidental, given by the sentries, quite unknown in the West, created universal dismay. Be it understood, then, that wild animals of the canine family in the East, when affected with hydrophobia, rush furiously upon all human creatures whom they can reach.—"A mad jackal! a mad jackal!—ho, snake-catcher, take care of yourself!" Without staying to dispute the propriety of this designation, De Jungle took to his heels at full speed, expecting to find an open door at the other side of the house. Steelbow, whose melody had just been got under by the ladies, to announce his danger, hearing the noise of the other's approach, set off at double quick time in search of an aperture too. He thus completed the circuit of the terrace, taking his affrighted rival for the rabid wild beast; and when the latter unluckily fell headlong into the basin of the fountain, Steelbow in despair bolted, with a loud crash, through one of Mr Guttlethorpe's standing cheekes into the dining-room.

Steelbow was not a little delighted next day to learn that, notwithstanding the cruel interruption, his performance gave marvellous satisfaction. He insisted on having his reward speedily.—"La! General," said his prompted and insidious adviser, "I wonder how one like you, who has lived with kings and courtiers, should ask the Sahibzadee in such a plain, vulgar way." He would do it in any way that she liked, then. Her ladyship declared that he ought to proceed by elopement. Sending all his establishment to a place about forty miles distant, inhabited by native Christians, he should carry the young lady there, get married, and thence go on to take possession of her principality. This scheme was highly approved of by the lover, whose very imperfect acquaintance with the refined classes of women prevented him from suspecting female guile at present. I need not mention here what counsel the other suitor received. Both, however, announced their approaching

departure to the family, and despatched their numerous attendants several days before them. At the farewell dinner, the guests, as if to buoy up their spirits against the depressing sorrow at parting, drank till they could scarcely take leave in the erect posture. About the witching hour of night, Steelbow, mounted on the driver's seat of a vehicle drawn by two bullocks, called a palanquin carriage, drove softly up to a door adjoining Eurasia's apartments. An old Portuguese woman, belonging to the Catholic village, sat inside. Strict silence having been enjoined to all concerned, until the prize were fairly lodged in the priest's house, not a syllable was uttered. Presently a female form, doubtless in disguise, crept from the room into the carriage. Away it flew, the cattle bounding under the lash, stage after stage, at which relays awaited the fugitives. At length the neat huts appeared, in the moonlight, of the humble Christians, who, forming a separate community to avoid the scoffs of surrounding heathens, dwelt here beside the mansion of their pastor, judge, and friend. Roaring to that reverend person to get up, that there was a glorious job for him, the ardent lover sprung from his seat and ran to the object of his solicitude. Lifting her out of the vehicle in his arms, he began to use such tender familiarities as the occasion authorized. But what was his astonishment to get in return a kick on the shins, and his horror when reproved in a voice totally unexpected there?—"Wherefore do you comprehend me so, and make kisses?—let go! I am not woman." Steelbow, in his own phrase, dropping his armful like a hot coal, cried out, "Jack of the Jungle! what the devil brought you here?"—"And what arch devil brings you? I come to marry Sahibzadee, and she is in carriage there. Lady Ludgate made me swear not to speak to her on road." Expectation, however, was instantly annihilated by the old Portuguese woman, who stepping from the vehicle, curtsied thanks to the gentlemen for conveying her home, retired, and left them to mutual explanation.—"Lord, how the jade has choused us both!" cried Steelbow, and soon forgot his disappointment.

To the infinite joy and relief of General de Jungle, an imperial messenger was now announced bearing an express from Delhi, whom the Viceroy prepared immediately to receive with the usual formalities. Before leaving the room, however, he put into the hand of this distinguished officer a token of "Sahibzadee's" remembrance, unconsciously concealed by him in the detained packet, which was no less than her commission appointing him *Naib*, or Deputy-Governor of her principality.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

THE express from the capital commanded Dalbracken to repair to his master at Delhi with as little delay as possible. Dara, though scarcely ever doubting that he must again appeal to arms, and earn his succession to the throne by subduing the rebels in person, strove zealously to avert such a calamity from the empire. But Aurungzeb's system of mining his way to a station which he still affected publicly never to aspire to, had, under the able conduct of the celebrated Hadji, more than neutralized the effects of all the victories in Guzerat. This person, after obtaining an extraordinary influence, such as barbarians generally attribute to magic, but which is in reality often the result of superior civilization, now pretended to give advice for the good of the empire, and to favour his original employer solely on account of that orthodox Prince's transcendent godliness. The heir-apparent, not doubting for an instant of the man's being a most artful instrument of his enemy, could only succeed in debarring him from personal intercourse with the old Emperor, whilst numerous and daily indirect channels inevitably remained open for his communications. The Viceroy saw his house infested with spies: his messengers, arriving and departing, frequently robbed of their dispatches; whilst the reluctance of Shah Jehan to sanction any measures for removing the cause of these insults on authority, restrained the Prince from using that power with which he was lawfully invested. Under these embarrassing circumstances he seemed to have no alternative between superseding an aged and beloved parent, and proceeding to a distant part of the empire, where he might act at discretion without hurting the feelings of his father. The town of Ajmeer answered this purpose, and offered besides, from its central position, advantages in watching the movements of his hostile brethren. Still there was much danger, lest in leaving the Court he should lose so much influence as to give predominance to Roshenara and the Hadji. Jehanara, however, his steady and unfailing support, undertaking the management of the palace, approved of his departure, provided an able and faithful officer in whom both could rely, were appointed to command the garrison of Delhi, and act as Dara's representative. He was extremely well pleased to find his sister perfectly satisfied with the nomination of the Viceroy of Malwa to this important situation.

Transferring his entire power to Cambridge, and despatching De Jungle to enter on office as Lieutenant-Governor of Soorajpore, Dalbracken immediately obeyed the imperial summons. A villa on the rocky eminence running to the north-west of the city, called Mejnoon, was prepared for receiving him before his formal intro-



duction into the capital. None but an Oriental landscape could afford the beautiful view which this spot commanded. Beneath, at the distance of two miles, appeared the "city of Shah Jehan," which, at the beginning of his reign, had risen with magical celerity from the ruins of ancient Delhi. The broad sweep of the river Jumna, stealing from the north, vanished behind fortifications to the south, and reappeared dividing the champaign to the west like a placid lake. Many mosques within the walls lifted their spacious domes of white marble in the air, surrounded by still higher minarets. The palace, a mountainous mass of red granite, surmounted by a thousand snow white cupolas, each of them crested with glittering pinnacles, drew the eye to the abode of power. The level country, as far as visible, exhibited little villages on its surface, buried in their separate groupings of trees, whilst the space around them was denuded and dreary. But the streets and the whole of the town seemed one vast forest, displaying its varying expanse of verdure beneath the splendid buildings that shone in the sun.

At a private interview which took place immediately after Dalbracken's arrival, the Prince made a full disclosure to him of the state of his affairs, the politics of the Court, and the measures which he contemplated for the future. Hastening his own departure, he left his delegate with scarcely any restrictions on his judgment in promoting their common cause. "But," observed Dara, "you will perceive from what I have been saying of his Majesty's habits, that you must submit to offer advice and receive orders through female agency. I hope you have no objection to communicate through the lady Jehanara?" Despite the searing influence of the world, and the narcotic draughts of a turbulent life, the temperament of sensibility still unsubdued, gave birth to an emotion which flushed the European's countenance at these words. On being questioned, however, and desired to say frankly whether he held such a mode of transacting public business derogatory to him, he disclaimed very candidly any feeling of the kind, imputing his embarrassment to diffidence of being able to give satisfaction to so illustrious a directress. This brought his master to the old subject of matrimony. After sundry discussions and consultations, he was presented with a Georgian girl of fourteen, and instructed to instal her as the mistress of his domestic establishment, in order that she might receive female visitors who could not avowedly see him in person face to face on political business. The feelings, fortune, and happiness of this young woman were, agreeably to Eastern custom, considered of no importance. Dalbracken, however, had scruples about sacrificing her to a needful arrangement which he saw it would be impossible to make even Dara or his wife think reasonable. The lady thus bestowed on him was a Christian called Mariam, the daughter of an officer bearing the rank of nobility in the Persian army, who had fallen in a skirmish with the Mogul troops, when his family were captured at the time the Prince governed Candahar. Though a slave by the laws of Moslem war, the captive had been brought

up by the Princess in a station fully equal to her birth, and she regarded her benefactress with filial affection. As one of the Nadira's household, she would have been an acceptable bride to the greatest of Shah Jehan's subjects. He to whom she was consigned, having set his heart and mind on projects incompatible with uniting himself honourably to her, resolved on treating the young Georgian as his ward in the European fashion. He appointed David Kirkland her guide, philosopher, and friend, to teach her his best English, and any other accomplishment which he could communicate, with her approbation. The poor thing, sobbing and weeping at being taken away from the only home she knew, was brought with a retinue of handmaids to the house of her destined master by a Siddee or Abyssinian eunuch. This guardian, clearing the apartment, prepared for Mariam's reception, tore the veil from her face, and left his charge alone with Dalbracken. Displeased at the man who thus acted as if delivering over an affianced wife, he soon made her understand the position which she was to hold. Regarding this new inmate of his house with calm indifference, as he would look at another person's child, Dalbracken wondered how a living creature, having apparently the exact proportions of admired statues in limbs, bust, and features, could be without the least expression in any of them. Mariam's eyes, mouth, and cheeks, as yet resembled the dim outline of the figures in a transparency, seen only by the light which it reflects from its surface. But after kind words had dried her tears, and given one hitherto no more than an indulged bondswoman, Christian liberty and the highest place in a household which she might call her own, feelings of satisfaction and gratitude, like the rays shining through a diaphanous picture, illumining the fine moulded clay, made him aware that beauty of the countenance is derived from mental and moral influences.

With this novel appendage to his establishment, Dalbracken was put in possession of the palace which the famous Ali Murdun Khan had bequeathed to the Prince. After suffering dilapidation, a remnant of it, rather clumsily Westernized, is now the official habitation of the British resident at Delhi. The adjoining mansion of the magnificent Dara stood where at present stands the Honourable Company's magazine, containing materials for holding the empire of his race in subjection. One of the first visitors whom the new commander of the garrison received at his town residence, was a devout gentleman that he did not at first recognise. "Your lordship's enemies are the enemies of my house. May your lordship increase in riches, and live for ever!"—"The holy Syud Gazi-o-Deen, I believe? Is your noble Nabob here too?" Gazi was his lordship's very humble servant, who disclaimed any connection with Yacoub ben Leeth, being now enjoying the society of godly men, and despising the world; and, as appropriate to this intimation, he stated his object in paying his respects so early, to be the making of a request for permission to repose by night in a certain corner of Ali Murdun's palace, which had been sanctified some two centuries before by the

contiguous interment of a great saint. This boon was granted with a good grace, by no means on account of the estimation in which Dalbracken held the petitioner, but from a belief that he could render the old man useful. The high descent and misfortunes of the Syud gained him admission to people of all ranks and parties. He enjoyed, in particular, the honour of free access to the Hadji, who was now considered by most of the citizens as a friend to the country, and not a partizan.

The Vicegerent's representative underwent a thousand unmeaning ceremonies, behaving to tried friends and known foes as if he really thought them equally attached to his master. The same compliments were paid to both of the rival Princesses, who appeared in return to honour him alike. He began to entertain hopes of conciliating some powerful individuals. The Hadji himself, the supposed source of so much mischief, being by report neither a fool nor an enthusiast, might possibly be managed. With this view, putting Gazi in good humour, by adding sundry acts of hospitality to the grant of his nocturnal lodging, he consulted him concerning the terrestrial wants of his ghostly friend, whose domicile was within the enclosure of the Grand Mosque. The wise man was pronounced rather partial to select company, which threw difficulties in the way of an introduction to him; yet the infinite good which one of his worth could do with gold and silver, made him not insensible of their value. Dalbracken, determining to assail in this vulnerable point, deputed the Syud to present an offering for him, with a letter, which, whilst it sounded the praises of his sanctity, served also as a check to any casual lapse of memory in the pious messenger relative to the amount to be delivered. Expecting at least partial success from this measure, he waited patiently for the result. His reception, too, by Aurungzeb's adherents, led him to conceive a grand project for elevating Dara at once above competition. This was to get the title as well as the power of joint Emperor conferred on the Prince. The bestowal of such a dignity, however, would encounter much opposition, not only from the hostile faction, but the disinterested friends of Shah Jehan. Our politician, therefore, bent on disarming all opponents, and on preserving profound secrecy in the mean time, eagerly sought a more private audience with the Princess Jehanara than she had yet vouchsafed to him. Between decorum and policy, the lady had little of her own will on this delicate subject, of giving audience to a man too narrowly watched to escape public notice. At last he was promised a private interview. He entered her square court with a palpitating heart; but how vast was his disappointment to find, instead of her chamberlain only, whose extrusion likewise he was plotting, half-a-dozen guardians of the Haram posted in the Hall of Twelve Doors, as the place of audience is called, and the old go-between at the Jeroca, or opening, over which the concealing curtain hangs. Though politics at this time were uppermost in his head, he had never relinquished the hope of getting behind this sacred barrier.

With such facility of comprehension, and promptness of observation, did the invisible being converse on the high concerns of state and war, that he almost suspected her of having a General and Prime Minister there already. From the first, they had got on with perfect cordiality and good understanding, yet he durst not speak his mind before a third person. What was to be done? He had written several letters, but knowing the peril of trusting such documents to messengers in the East, none of them were dispatched. One of these now lay in his girdle, which he would have given a year's salary to discover an excuse for delivering. The very act of giving a letter to one whom he came to speak with, must create suspicion of its import. However, he took courage, and asked the chamberlain if her Highness ever condescended to read petitions. "Why should a Princess read? He had the honour to do that drudgery for his Imperial mistress."—"But," replied Dalbracken, "I have one which relates not only to Sultan Dara's affairs, but to a lady for whom his Highness is not less interested; and it were not fitting that any but the Princess should see or hear the contents." Jehanara, overhearing this dialogue, became as impatient as woman is wont to possess the secret document; and, at her fiat, the inviolable rules of the haram were suspended. She received the epistle unopened by ministerial hands. Silence and suspense reigned for some minutes. "Chamberlain, ask is Lady Mariam well?" now sounded softly from the shrine. "Say I am well pleased, and that her request of waiting on me has passed under review." The visitor presently obtained his dismissal, delighted beyond measure with the reception of his proposal; nor did he less admire the device by which a convenient explanation was given to his unwary European gallantry, and the prying pack of eunuchs put at the same time on a false scent. Poor little Mariam, thus kindly mentioned, had not once been named, alluded to, nor thought of, by her nominal lord.

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### CHAPTER XXX.

THE Emperor, Shah Jehan, was now quite incapable of transacting serious business, though he insisted in going through all the forms of it daily. The occupation in which he took pleasure, and for which alone he was fit, consisted in sitting in state to witness the sham fights of men and beasts. These were wrestlers by profession, elephants, buffaloes, deers, rams, and cats. All the performers seemed to have a very sensible general rule, with rare exceptions, not to hurt each other. The martial youth of Delhi also exhibited their prowess before him on saddles of mutton, and the chines of other animals, with swords. He who could at one

blow divide the loins and backbone of a sheep, was recognised by the imperial veteran as an inchoate hero, that would by-and-by cut live men in two with equal facility. The most disgusting frequenters of eastern courts, *gluttons*, were also here. The quantity of food which one of these fellows will swallow is beyond belief, be it cooked, raw, dead, or living. On being told, for instance, to make his dinner of a large goat, he catches it alive, eats his way from behind through the bowels, until his head protrudes under the neck in front. The beastly cannibal then, supposed to have gorged the entrails, jumps about on all fours, with his trunk cased in the carcase of his victim. Such sights are perhaps as rare now as bear baiting in Britain, but they continue still among the amusements of Indian princes. The absurdities of buffoons, and the wriggling of dancing women, killed time more privately. His Majesty's more rational entertainment was in seeing his studs of beautiful horses and elephants mustered every day. The elephants, as they passed in review, were taught to kneel before the presence, lift up their flexible trunks to the forehead, and shrill in their peculiar way, to imitate a salam or obeisance.

It was a pleasing reflection to consider a truly great monarch thus enjoying in his dotage the quiet which he had imposed on a distracted empire during his vigorous manhood. But the spectacle filled every mind with anxiety, when his feeble existence and nominal authority were manifestly all that remained to postpone the horrors of a desperate civil war.

Jehanara, eagerly embracing Dalbracken's suggestion, had, without mentioning its origin, sounded her father slightly on the policy of conferring a higher title on his eldest son. To the great regret of the proposer, the Emperor demanded his opinion of the measure at a public levee. The heir-apparent's friends, however, regarded his speedy elevation as certain, and orders were given to prepare for the august ceremony at court.

Gazi-o-Deen, after an unexplained delay, brought the Hadji's reply. The mysterious pilgrim, astrologer, and what not, respectfully declined receiving the visit of a gentleman whose piety was yet not known to fame, but promised his prayers, and—kept the money. The last circumstance gave good hopes of his services being gained, or at any rate neutralized. The supposition derived some confirmation from various reports of the holy man's subsequently praising Dara's noble qualities, and bewailing his errors. Things, on the whole, looked favourably. Nothing was wanting to make Dalbracken amply satisfied with his political procedure, but that meeting, without the intervention of a third person, which he had solicited with the great directress in terms of delicate ambiguity, yet quite intelligible.

One evening, towards the usual hour of retirement, after the inhabitants from their balconies and house tops had gone to the interior, a female messenger was announced in the haram, who desired to speak to Dalbracken. "The Princess," whispered she,

"commands your immediate attendance : please to order your lady's equipage, and follow me." In fond and ambitious anticipation of a moment so long and so ardently desired, he shut himself up in Mariam's palanquin, and the bearers being called into the square from without, lifted it up and trotted along with what they took for their mistress. His conductress, after satisfying a number of inquisitive challengers who stopped them several times, finally reached a place similar to that which they had left, enclosed by walls around and open above. The men retreated, the door closed behind them, and then the beldam, parting the shutters, uncaged her charge. The spot was deserted and silent. "We are safe now," said she, "let us ascend the staircase." He followed accordingly through a passage, little larger than a chimney, with as many turnings and windings as a screw describes in entering a cork. When dizzy and breathless, he beheld the stars twinkling above him, and stumbled forward on a level terrace. At the further end of it appeared a Bala Khana, or *High Chamber*, in which bright lamps were burning, and a lady sitting in stately privacy. The guide introduced him and disappeared instantly, closing the door as she departed. The Princess took no notice of his salutation outside. He boldly entered unbidden, and repeated it in the presence. Alas ! how unlike was the object before him to the picture which his heated imagination had been worshipping so long ! He now saw a woman, by no means ugly, but evidently cursed with a deforming taste. She thrust her hands into full view, displaying rings of pearls and diamonds on all her fingers, while the palms and nails shone dark red with the dye called *Hinna*. The upper semicircle of her ears, loaded at every point, was weighed down, till it doubled over the orifice, by a profusion of cumberous ornaments. Her forehead, and braided locks of indifferently combed hair, flamed in costly masses of precious stones and metals. What gave a more decided character to the Imperial lady's appearance, and made her look in the sequel like a cannibal at dinner, her Highness was chewing *pawn*. Affecting displeasure and surprise, she lolled, not very decorously, on the gaudy pillows, crying "Ha ! a man in this place ! who art thou who dare to set thy feet in our private apartment ?"—"The suppliant, Darr Beg Khan, the servant of Prince Dara the Magnificent, bends in the presence by command."—"Darr Beg Khan," replied she, assuming a becoming attitude, "we permit you to sit ; be seated here—know that you are welcome !" Having accommodated him in this manner, she proceeded to business. "We respect you even now, and will love you, if that upholder of a madman will become wise. Wherefore, my friend, should you continue the servant of 'Dara the Magnificent ?' Is it not known that the most learned of astrologers, the Reverend Haji, has read his downfall in the stars, which are the book of heaven ? The great have forsaken him on earth, and the infatuated Prince has you alone, not another, to perpetrate his wicked design of shedding the blood of thousands in vain, to make him what God declares he never shall

be!"—"Nasty jade," thought (but said not) Dalbracken; "I marry her! I would not take such a —— with the empire for her portion. Fool too! She thinks to try my fidelity by a shallow artifice like this." With these sentiments in his mind, and all the courtier in his face, "Madam," said he, "I approached you determined to live or die with the prosperity of the heir-apparent; but such is the united influence of beauty and eloquence, that I am already half a traitor."—"Thou Moon of Canaan and minister of Solomon, call thyself *wholly* on our side, and I will make thee Vizier to the pious and predestined monarch Aurungzeb!"—"Why should I not, Madam? My master desired me to confide always in the wisdom of your Highness. I have a very proper respect for the piety of the gentleman who is to begin his work of godliness, by destroying an elder brother, and usurping his birth-right. Our souls would undoubtedly reap the fruits of assisting him in the next world. But thinking as mere terrestrial beings of them and ourselves, shall we not lose a trifle by renouncing the high-souled and generous Dara, to set up the low-minded trickster of the Deccan?"—"Ha! ha!" rejoined the Princess, with the satisfied air of one who sees her argument prevailing, "If the want of 'generosity' be his only fault, I know who will supply the deficiency to you. 'Low minded!' Is he not the easier managed? You know who is to be his Shah Bejum, the ruling princess. Darr Beg Khan, say no more! You are her beloved! and at this moment, whatever you ask of her shall be granted as the pledge of power and grandeur to come."

I am afraid that the conqueror of Guzerat looked rather discomposed at hearing of the extraordinary test by which his political principles were to be tried, unless he had for once mistaken the phrasology of eastern diplomacy. In a case like this, high blood delights to condescend. Perceiving him a diffident young man who required some encouragement, she moved close to his knee, languishing with a most hideous consciousness of her powers to charm. Her next act of condescension was to fasten one of her dirty looking paws on the nape of his neck, and to begin caressing him with the other. Whilst he, amidst shame and disgust, was unsuccessfully essaying to speak, the lady looked in his face once more, and happened to belch aloud. This, however, being no breach of good manners in the East, gave her little concern: but as the gale, perfumed with garlic and onion, fanned his nostrils, the emotions excited by it probably recommended him more than ever. So much of the dove presently possessed her Imperial Highness, that nothing but a pigeon feeding its young can depict or express the affectionate attention which she bestowed on Dalbracken. "Madam!" cried he, nearly suffocated, "I beg—I really feel very ill—will you permit me to retire?"—"Retire!" replied she, springing to her feet with a ferocious aspect, "Retire! is it a command to retire when a royal-born Princess tears asunder the veil of concealment, to sit face to face with a hind like thee? *Wah! wah! wah!*"—"I am ready to obey your Highness,"

answered he, "as the humblest slave, but this conduct is totally unintelligible to me : and neither understanding what I have heard or seen in the presence, I again crave permission to retire."—"Yes, slave," rejoined she in a shrieking whisper, and displaying in a ghastly grin of wrath, the teeth and recess of her mouth, which looked as if smeared with blood—"Yes, slave, thou shalt depart as traitors are wont. The oath of God ! thou hast but one step from the crest of that enclosing wall into the ditch beneath !" The space indicated might measure a hundred perpendicular feet. Two seconds more would bring armed women to execute the sentence, not perhaps entirely unacquainted with the duty. The impending danger, threatening an infamous death, roused his spirit from the inaction into which singular circumstances had cast him. Resolving to act the part of a politician rather than embrace martyrdom, he threw himself before the feet of the Princess, as she was proceeding to summon her handmaids, and made a speech. "Alas, thou mightiest disturber of cities, earthquake of the bosoms of youth, and light of the world ! how should I, a nursling of the shade, for the first time wipe dust with mine eyelids from thy feet, and gaze on imperial loveliness, without being dazzled by its splendour, even as the bird of midnight falls powerless and stupified before the burning eye of the universe." This sensible apology drew the expression of tigrine ferocity from her countenance. She stopped and listened patiently to hear more adulation, and finally became disposed to think that a man of such unequivocal good taste, who spoke truth of her so well, might be allowed to bear witness for himself. Knowing her faith in the host of heaven, he blamed the planets for his misfortune. Having now the best possible proof of a conjunction unfavourable to him, he appealed to her excellent judgment, whether anything but excessive zeal to serve an accomplished princess could make him commit the imprudence of neglecting to ascertain before hand a fact that would have kept him out of his present peril. The Princess, actually believing him won, highly approving his creed, and recapitulating the Hadji's discovery of Dara's fate, dismissed her visitor in the kindest humour, firmly expecting to see him soon return under happier stars, the dutiful subject of her Imperial will.

No particular precaution being taken to prevent egress from the palace, Dalbracken got easily out. When stretched at length in his vehicle, he found leisure to congratulate himself on being there, instead of feeding vermin and reptiles in the moat. But to shew the state of his mind after this occurrence, it may answer best to give his own soliloquy.—"My unconquerable habit of courting women's good will, after bringing me so often into trouble, has got me out of jeopardy for once. Had that Fury been a man, I could not have submitted to save my life by bombastic flattery. How egregiously the world is deceived ! Jehanara, the being on whom my imagination doated as the perfection of beauty, filial love, and sisterly affection, what have I found her ! A savage termagant—the



traitress of a brother whom she evidently esteems—ready to go to any extreme in the cause of a man of inferior parts, whom she would place on the throne, in order that, by ruling him, she might gratify her selfish lust of power! I wonder if all men who feel their attractions are equally fools as to women! Coldly treated by the forbidden object I first loved; bewitched by an accomplished swindler, who had only that affection in her love which a sportsman has for his game; now disappointed with disgust, and nearly put ignominiously to death by an idol of my imagination; when shall I see two women alike, or know what any one of them is till too late?" He did not take a solemn vow never to think, feel, or dream favourably of one of the sex again, but went to bed of opinion that such ought to be his future conduct.

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JAMES.—I do not like this Princess. I suspect she is no better than she should be. What meant the lad, in his wild speech, by these phrases:—"Disturber of cities,"—"Nursling of the shade,"—"Bird of midnight?"

BROWNIE.—*Disturber of the city*, is the Persian paraphrase for a beauty. *Nursed in the shade*, means brought up in retirement, or in ignorance of the world. The *Bird of night* is the owl.

JAMES.—Why does Malcolm Dalbracken, who was brought up honestly in Scotland, always talk like a man in liquor when he gets into earnest conversation with eastern people?

BROWNIE.—Recollect, James, that he has to speak to them in an oriental language, which I translate for your benefit. I frequently give you the idiom of the original in English words, but oftener an imitation of it, which convey a more correct idea of foreign speech than untranslated phrases and vocables can do. You must not consider the phraseology of the East bombastic, though it is addressed to the feelings rather than the judgment, and is more verbose, vague, and figurative than suits Western taste.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

DURING the week which followed, nothing could be more inexplicable than the politics of the court of Delhi to the heir-apparent's representative. Preparations for the new inauguration still went on; his declared friends congratulated Dalbracken on the event as now certainly approaching; nay, the Princess herself had the effrontery to send him repeated communications on the subject. Considering this as a screen to her treason, he behaved civilly to the messengers,

resolving under any circumstances to keep the lady's personal secret. But he rather lost patience when a person whom he never saw before came to demand another private meeting with "the Princess."—"Make my humblest and most dutiful compliments to her Highness," said he, "and say that my astrologer has not yet discovered a time favourable for the visit." The answer and the tone were heard with a stare of astonishment by the confident, who retired in doubts of Darr Beg Khan's perfect sanity. The old Emperor having that day gone to his favourite Garden of Shalimar, seven miles distant, to enjoy a temporary relaxation from public toils, the courtiers were released from their wonted attendance at the morning and evening musters. Most of them employed the leisure thus afforded in visiting one another. Dalbracken, notwithstanding his conciliatory measures, was somewhat surprised to receive notification that ten eminent persons, amongst whom were the celebrated High Priest and a learned Persian Doctor, all notorious bigots and sworn adherents of Aurungzeb, proposed to wait upon him at the same hour. He embraced each, and when they were seated, began a lively conversation with them on topics of literature and science, that could excite no animosity.—"What countries has your lordship not seen?" observed the Primate: "Is the king of Europe tributary to the commander of the faithful who reigns in Estambool?" (meaning the Grand Seignior). The correction of this reverend gentleman's mistakes need not be recorded. But he continued to be very inquisitive respecting the arts and manners of people in the West.—"Pardon the freedom," said the Persian, "has your lordship ever been in Christendom?"—"Certainly," replied the host, "I was educated there."—"Pray, my lord," rejoined he, "can you settle a point disputed amongst us; when two Europeans quarrel, has he who can, a right to kill the other?"—"No."—"What then is done to the slayer?"—"Why, as in all well-governed countries, he is convicted before a court of law, and hanged or otherwise put to death."—"Murderers, therefore, are criminals there?"—"Assuredly. There are cases of justifiable homicide, easy to be supposed, and war, which I presume you reckon excluded."—"Did your lordship study the art of war in Europe?"—"No, my slight knowledge of it has been acquired entirely in India."—"What! not a soldier before you appeared as the leader of victorious armies?"—"Not until I landed in Guzerat."—"Stupendous genius!" ejaculated the whole party, looking strangely one at another.—"Doubtless," added the High Priest, "one so great in arms is equally skilled in letters. A manuscript has just been discovered which the most learned of us cannot decipher; may I beg of you to look at it?" He accordingly presented a paper which the other took, observing every eye rivetted upon him. It was no other than the note which he himself had written in the thieves' den, and sent by Kirkland to Adeline! With a loud interjection of amazement, Dalbracken rose up and crossed the apartment. The rest, as good manners enjoined, left their seats also, following with a gaze of concern, which admirably marked their inward delight at

the success of a concerted scheme. Begging pardon for his abruptness, he requested them to resume their places, and to the astonishment of all, claimed the document as his own autograph. He explained the nature of a duel, and how the written law of the country in which he then resided condemned a practice that was, notwithstanding, fully sanctioned by the opinion and custom of society. Every auditor perceived and affected to acknowledge this nice distinction. To allay his anxiety, they further lavished on him a profusion of compliments, disclaiming the remotest suspicion of his ever having done anything dishonourable.—“Gentlemen,” said he, “I shall never shrink from avowing any part of my past conduct, and you have just had an explanation of the most unfortunate act of my life. Now, I expect you with equal sincerity to state what person, directly or indirectly acquainted with me in Europe, produced this paper to prejudice you against me.” Each and all of them declared solemnly that they knew no such individual. The High Priest affirmed that the note dropped among the astrologers lately, none perceived from whence, though he conjectured the wind to have brought it there. No polite importunity could elicit more information relative to this mysterious importation. Complete harmony seemed to prevail in the party, and the visitors departed after hugging Dalbracken very cordially. His only remaining engagement for the day was to call on old Gazi, in the room occupied by him, in honour of his high birth, a duty which had been delayed until a hint of it was given. He hoped now to obtain some information, from this excellent person, about the mysterious advent of the letter, but was disappointed. The worthy man, now deprived of the riches of this world, could only afford to treat a friend with pawn and attar. The last is an essential oil of roses, with which the host anoints the hands, and, to the horror of delicate Europeans, the clothes of his guests, on their taking leave of him. The other is a compounded delicacy to be chewed and eaten. Pawn consists properly of five vine leaves laid one above another, shell-lime, cardamom seeds, and beetle nut, of which last a skewer is made, which, transfixing all the ingredients folded into a triangular shape, holds them compactly together. Dalbracken received this dainty preparation from the Syud's hands with every token of respect, but greatly disappointed the prophet's descendant by merely nibbling a bit of its outer leaf, instead of transferring the whole, bodily, to the stomach, like a hungry guest. This forbearance proceeded chiefly from his lively recollection of the scene in which he had beheld the infuriated Princess masticating the same preparation. After leaving Gazi's chamber, he proceeded to his own closet to prepare a dispatch, which should apprise Dara of his sister's treachery, and of the posture of affairs at court, which, though externally promising, ought to make him place his hopes exclusively in the efficiency of his army. He concluded by suggesting his own recall, as, expecting early hostilities, he wished to be at the head of his legions. This was a gloomy prospect. Unwilling to trust a scribe with these sentiments, he submitted to the labour of penning

the whole himself in a difficultly written foreign language. The letter lay on a table ready to be sealed and sent off, when, lying down on a couch to recruit his exhausted strength, he was assailed by two messages in succession to repair instantly to the presence of "the Princess." He declined complying, rather gruffly, and refused to the last messenger more than a simple negative. An abrupt announcement at the door, and the immediate entrance of the young Iberian, attended by two old women, next interrupted his meditations. Assuming an air of decision, tempered with kindness, he demanded her business there. With a voice not hesitating, though reduced by awe and timidity to the utmost softness, Mariam replied—"I would make a request to my lord about the great ladies in the palace, that I do not like to send by the mouths of poor people."—"Be quick then and tell it, madam."—"How dare I speak, since my lord is angry? I will not offend him."—"I am not angry, young lady, though rather surprised; but, since you have come here, sit down and let me hear your story." Waiting till he set the example, she beckoned her attendants out of hearing, and took her seat on the floor beside him. Then parting the long white veil to uncover her face and hands—"Oh, my lord," said she, with joined hands, "I beseech you, go no more to the Palace in that way. Some of the Princesses are very cruel, and it comes into my heart that you will be killed yonder." It cost him an effort to interrupt this artless admonition, by observing coldly that he knew best how to take care of himself. "My lord once was good to me, but the thankfulness of this handmaid is to-day a fault before him. I beg to say another thing, and then take leave for fear my tears displease my lord. Oh! I cannot check them long.—When the Princess Nadira asks why her house-bred daughter visits that enemy of the Vicegerent, staying hours with her, how shall I answer—'Mother, father, it was not your child, but the Viceroy, who went to the Lady Roshenara in my palanquin.'"—"Roshenara!" ejaculated Dalbracken, "*Roshenara!*" laying emphasis on a name which was sufficient to explain the whole series of troubles and misconceptions into which he had been led. He perceived in a moment, that from never expecting to have intercourse with any Princess but one, after his ceremonies of conciliation, his anxiety to see Jehanara had precipitated him into the residence of her sister. As if dismissing the poor girl—"Very well—do not cry—I am much pleased with you, Lady Mariam," said he, looking bewildered, and thinking of a far different object. Throwing off the Asiatic, in this glad perturbation, he moved up and down the apartment till tired, and then sunk upon the couch. The rest given to his limbs let loose the imagination which, like a greyhound at fault, now rushed anew on the re-appearing game of successful politics and ambitious love with restored energies. He accordingly charged Mariam with an apologetic mission to Jehanara, explanatory of his mistake, suppressing of course whatever might lead to a suspicion of any other than political overtures from the Lady Roshenara. He

ascertained from his fair friend, that the former Princess's emissary had been twice dismissed; and a person from the latter, dreading the wrath of her mistress, durst not go back with his uncourtly negative, but remained still in the haram. After feeling serious alarm on the subject, he was satisfied, by a little investigation, that a marvellous proficiency in lying and dissembling rendered these messengers safe depositaries of confidence, whether diplomatic or tender. The young lady met with a very kind reception, but soon returned accompanied by a more sagacious person of the same sex. "Ha! ha!" cried the lively hag, when she had him alone, "his lordship knows me, I think, and why not. I knew the devil was in him when he talked to me of looking at the stars before he would come to my mistress. A pretty speech; but no double play with us. The Lady Roshenara's woman is still in your house—send for the hussey to this very place, and dismiss her for good in my hearing—proceed, I will hide here and listen, to report the truth to her Highness. What else?" A difficult part was thus assigned him, but he saw the propriety of undertaking it. He therefore called the affrighted confidant, and spoke as follows:—"Make my most humble obeisance to her Imperial Highness, and say that this suppliant, being the servant of Sultan Dara, cannot approach the concealing curtain of that Princess who opposes his master, because he would sooner perish than betray confidence of any sort reposed in him, whether by a friend or an enemy. Her Highness is wise, and will comprehend all my petition." No doubt was expressed of her wisdom, but dreadful apprehension of her anger, which the confidant would rather a piece of paper should stand the brunt of than her own person. Dalbracken, very credulous on this subject, transmitted his ultimatum in a finely gilt letter, within an embroidered bag. The business was thus settled to the entire satisfaction of the other party, whom I beg to introduce, on returning from her hiding-place, as Mistress Chumpā. She presently surveyed all the adjoining nooks and recesses, and, finding them tenantless, her prudence further desired that the sentries without might be ordered to let nobody come near. Next, squatting down very unceremoniously before a great man,—"There!" said she, drawing a letter from her bosom. It was indorsed—"Duplicate of a dispatch believed to be intercepted from the Vicegerent to Nabob Darr Beg Khan." This communication, the original of which certainly never reached him, purported that the rebels, either really fearing the heir-apparent's movement to Ajmeer, or making it a pretence, were mustering their forces both in the west and east. Some imperfect and obscure notice had been obtained of an attempt on the capital, the success of which would be the signal for the march of the confederates, on one side, and Suja on the other. The concluding portion, recommending tried friends to command at the different gates permanently, and special care of himself, so obnoxious to the enemy, was the public affair on which Jehanara had wished to see him. His ignorance of the characters of the men who at that moment held those

important posts, the old Emperor's departure, and the absence in his train of Dara's principal friends, all creating the greatest anxiety, he wanted immediately to advise with the Princess in this emergency. Chumpa, however, to his surprise, knew nothing of politics; but fully aware that her Highness had important business with him, which the hostile faction must not even hear of, he would assuredly get an audience more private than the former ones. His lordship, however, could not go to the palace at that hour, though he might expect orders next day. "Be ready," whispered she, retiring and grinning, "and don't talk about stars when I come again."

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

THE closet in which Dalbracken received private visitors, purposely communicated with the haram, into the open square of which all such negotiators being set down, were believed by the external world to have business with the ladies only. Chumpa had not been absent two hours when she returned, enjoining him to report himself sick, and send to a druggist for some medicine, which is known to make those who take it keep to the house. "Why so, mistress? I am perfectly well."—"Pshaw! His lordship is as great a simpleton as his lady; wont he send all the people from his doors? And shant I come for him to-morrow at the proper time?" He did exactly as desired, though still ignorant of this intelligent person's plan, disliking so much mystery, and withal given to mistrust the agent. His doubts increased when he heard early next day, that idle persons from all quarters of the city were crowding the principal street to see the Princess Jehanara go with her splendid equipage to pay her respects to a reverend *Peer*, resident at the suburb of Subsimundee. The *Peer* is a holy man in the East, on whom females of every rank and age may call without reproach, analogous, in some particulars, to a Roman Catholic confessor. But Mistress Chumpa returning at the appointed hour of noon, made so light of his scruples, that having gone so far, he resolved to finish the adventure. This woman, like most menials, indulged in familiarities with the great, was wont to make very free and often impertinent remarks without being insolent. Her face was fat, coarse, and deeply wrinkled, but the eyes retained their youth, and the whole countenance had an expression of arch good humour. Full charged with secret knowledge of some sort, she looked altogether like a well corked bottle of spruce beer, which, shake it as you will, may fiz with empty air, but lets nothing substantial escape. A laugh, an

interjection, toss of the head, or motion with the hand, answered all unnecessary or inconvenient interrogations. "Make haste, my lord; there is nobody looking," cried she. "Why, where is the conveyance for me?" demanded he. "Conveyance? get into the palanquin there, and sit well back to make room for me!" replied Mistress Chumpa. "For you? am I to be bundled into a covered bed like that, in such dangerous company?"—"Ha! waggish words, my gallant lord."—What! is he not going to the back door of her Highness's apartment, instead of the hall of twelve doors, this time? If the sentries or eunuchs stop us, who is to speak to them?" As these cogent reasons, communicated in a whisper, with the hand clapped to one side of her mouth, could not be overruled, he took the prescribed seat. Jolting along, he heard a door at last turning on its hinges, when his sage guide thrusting forward the anterior shutter, revealed enough of her person to obtain them a free passage, whilst he continued hidden. The chattering of monkeys, the chirping of birds, the splashing of waterfowl in a tank, the sound of fountains playing, the operations of cookery, invaded all senses but the eye before the vehicle landed, and was deserted in a corridor. Chumpa making a significant sign to be silent, led the way up several steps, when they entered a suite of beautiful apartments, to which she carefully barred subsequent access by bolting the door. They were, however, so small, that the vulgar of Europe would call them pigeon holes. The floor displayed, over a thick cotton quilt, a covering of snow-white muslin, drawn tight as a drum, to look perfectly smooth. On a level with the ground, glass windows having gauze curtains on the inside, shed a milky and glareless light through the rooms. Above each exit and entrance of the interior was furled a piece of white satin fringed with gold tassels, under which they passed. Presently one of these appeared unrolled in front, which being interpreted, said to the guest, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." This little bower had many proportional niches in the walls, which, like the roof, were ornamented with innumerable gilt flowers. At either end two half pillars, superbly carved and resembling gold, supported the canopy of roses. There were pillows on the floor for one, and carpets or seats for two. The venerable conductress here, seizing his shoulders and pressing him down upon one of the parallelograms of brocade, hobbled off and vanished beyond the curtain. Thus was Dalbracken left for a space to be agitated by the hopes and fears incident to his novel predicament.

But far from wishing to inflict the anxious suspense which he endured on the reader, I will presently introduce him to the toilet of the Imperial Lady. If a man of taste who has seen a Parisian dressing-room, he may beg to decline the honour, as *being* already acquainted with the best of such exhibitions, and *having reasons* for desiring to see no more. I promise quite

another spectacle. So let him throw aside European prejudice, preconceived notions, and accidental associations, and after hearing a short preface, follow me. Be it known, in the first place, that all the natives of India are not *black*, which term is frequently used by their high-born fair in reproach of the ill-favoured. Leanness being reckoned a kind of deformity amongst them, the daughters of the great generally manage, by appropriate regimen, to become plump. Living under roofs at all times, they are equally protected from the fervour of one season, and the piercing cold of another. Their skin is consequently possessed of a delicacy and downy softness unknown in the West. Its colour among the Moguls nearly resembles the white satin curtaining these doorways, and familiar to ladies in Europe. The "oriental eye" in them has also its peculiarities. The whole organ, large and somewhat prominent, shews much white at the angles, while the space between the ball and eyebrows, which are more strongly marked, is also greater than it appears in the inhabitants of Christendom.

Indian women born in elevated stations, passing most of their time from infancy in paying or receiving visits, with others of similar rank, are remarkably easy and polite in their deportment. There are no hoidens of gentle blood in the East. Taught to read and write, they are seldom prohibited from cultivating the understanding, though a majority of them are quite destitute of mental accomplishments. In a society secluded and idle, personal decoration might, on a superficial view, be supposed to attain perfection. In fact, however, it scarcely goes beyond cleanliness and convenience. Far less picturesque than the flowing garments of the men, the dress of the softer sex serves to mitigate the climate, rather than please the eye, and display wealth, instead of enhancing their charms. *Eustephenous*, or beautifully crowned, with natural hair or chaplets of flowers, so finely descriptive of the most attractive ornament of Asiatic women in old times, is not applicable to the damsels of India.

A being like me, fleshless and unimpassioned, may not always know what will awaken impure thoughts in gross mortality. I shall not therefore venture to describe the inner chamber of the bath, where the most perfect form of Caucasian mould, not immersed in a cistern, reclines on her marble couch, surrounded by skilful handmaids, who pouring the tepid stream from many pitchers, elute with gentle friction the abodes of all the Graces. Then she sits up, to receive from an inverted urn the delicious shower of rosewater, which, descending upon the head, and thence flowing downwards, on all sides, washes away even the stain of inferior hands. This place being extremely hot, and the atmosphere of steam, the princess wrapped in a sheet advanced to the middle, or drying-room, where the air, still kept warm by means of fires under the floor, is free



from aqueous vapour. When seated here, the active attendants removed the moisture from her person, and bearing up the luxuriant train of hair which would otherwise rest on the ground, rubbed, combed, and held it extended until the humidity disappeared. The next stage is the tiring-room, which is not heated, but shut up. The ministering virgins now proceeded in their work. Their mistress was delicately anointed all over with scented oil. Her locks, made glossy and smooth, were parted in the middle of the head, drawn back behind the ears, whence collected and plaited, the whole mass fell in one long braid down her back. They next presented her with a pair of trousers, moderately tight, which, like all her garments at this season, were white, trimmed or spangled with gold. This piece of dress was drawn close to the body above the haunches by a running cord. A tunic, similarly tightened at the throat, and leaving the arms bare, descended about the width of a shift, nearly to the knees. Over it a delicate network adapted to the purpose, compressed and parted the lady's bosom. The attendants having by this time twisted a wreath of fine muslin, so as to make its embroidered border cross the cord at intervals, placed it, scarcely touching the forehead of the Princess, over her temples, and fastened it behind. On the front of it was a diamond star, whence a royal egret rose upward. The ears were not disfigured with ornaments of any sort; but stealing from behind them, her raven locks mantled over her breast. Jehanara should have left her hands unencumbered too, as nothing could enhance their attractiveness; they were richly adorned, however, with a pretty gold ring on each finger, a bracelet on each wrist, and chains of pearls connecting them along the backs of her hands. Lastly, the oriental veil called doputta, a large wrapper of snowy brightness, sprinkled with small flowers of gold, enveloped the whole of her person from head to foot, and was destined, in obedience to appropriate movements of the arms, to hide or reveal at will any part or all of what it encompassed.

How shall I describe the charms of an Eastern princess, without rival in her age? The very mention to men of the West of trousers on a woman, conjures up some termagant usurping the inexpressible vesture of her husband. If I proceed further in treating of complexion, to intimate that a tinge of yellow gives the white of frosty Caucasus a warmer and more voluptuous hue, I can hope to awaken nothing better than ideas of jealousy, jaundice, and duck's feet in European minds. Hyperborean romancers and bards may inspire admiration of a damsel's fingers; but which of them has ever dared to extol the elegance and delicacy of her toes? The name of them is proscribed! No ear can hear, no eye behold the cribbed, confined, ill-washed organs of locomotion, in the fairest forms of *Christendom*. The Lady Jehanara's foot was, except the

eyes, the most strikingly beautiful part of her. Whoever would conceive how comely it appeared in its naked symmetry, must go to the nursery and look at his children's feet, before conventional barbarity has made them hideous. The countenance of the Princess, open and well proportioned, was full of animation, yet perfectly feminine. Her mouth, in repose, had something of haughtiness and disdain in it; but when she smiled, it spoke irresistible sweetness. Under thick eyebrows, slightly arched, and long lashes, her eyes, large and dark as midnight with all its mystery, seemed to float in an atmosphere of their own light. From his meeting to his parting day with this lady, Dalbracken tried in vain to read the expression of those eyes. Generalizing his experience, and recalling the looks of Clara, Adeline, the Sahibzadee—he thought eyes, in most cases, told the natural character of the owner, without indicating super-induced qualities. Yet here was a pair more magical than all, whose power seemed to lie in indefinitude. They commanded the allegiance of heart and spirit, without shewing how.

Just as the ornaments were adapting to the Imperial beauty's wrists, Chumpa came in, made obeisance, and stood still, but spoke not. "Chumpa! has the packet arrived?"—"It is lodged as her Highness commanded."—"Girls," said the Princess, "go above, get ready every one of the paper kites, put more glue, and renew the pounded glass on the strings. I wish to fly them all this evening against our neighbour's kites, to cut their strings and give the boys of the town a fine scramble for the gilt dragons that will then fall to the ground. And should you have time afterwards, examine the pigeons' feathers, and prepare them for a good flight into the Doab, that we may teach them to seduce my sister's flock, and empty her dove-cot entirely. Be busy! if one of you come down before sunset I will scold terribly!" Away they ran with joyous alacrity. "Motee! call lady Motee."—"Here! madam."—"Motee, our equipage waits, you will take my place, and apologize to the Peer, saying that indispensable business prevents me from seeing him to-day."—"Chumpa, is the hall of mirrors in order?"—"Yes, madam."—"Remain in the corridor within call, and shut that door behind me as I go to him." Thus commanding and obeyed, the Princess, snatching some wreaths of flowers from a basket, glided past the curtain and stood unveiled before her palpitating visitor. He rose instantly, and bent low in salutation. "Your lordship," said she, "is highly welcome. I bring good tidings. No plot can now succeed in the city: the heir-apparent in half a month will receive the dignity of King, so properly suggested by you, which elevation, supported by your talents and renown, cannot fail to quiet the empire, and secure to all the friends of Sultan Dara the peaceful enjoyment of their good fortune."—"Does the exalted daughter of monarchs herself announce such news, and commend with melody, like the streams of paradise, the humblest

of her slaves?" Enjoying his embarrassment.—"Are we strangers then," said she? "I thought we had met before." Not knowing well how to continue this dialogue in his own words, he resorted to the Persian poets: "*I formerly heard the voice of the bird of spring, but it shewed me not the sweets of the garden, nor the graceful form of the waving cypress.*"—"Accept the sweets of the garden and the garden queen herself," replied the lady, "as the reward of your fine recitation;" and never, to his imagining, did fame or victory, in colours or stone, bestow a wreath with more grace than she dropped one of roses and jessamines over his head, which now hung from his neck. This favour was promptly acknowledged by another quotation: "*If the nightingale sees but the rose, he gets intoxicated with the wine of delight.*" She saw him struck with unfeigned admiration, and, true to female nature, was pleased. By her desire both were seated, and they prepared the way to further acquaintance, by repeating short passages from the poets after the eastern fashion among persons of refinement. Notwithstanding Dalbracken's modesty, on ordinary occasions, it may be doubted whether the union of assurance and Persian literature has ever succeeded better than in his instance, though I know one or two cases strongly affirmative. The potent composition proved also levelling in its consequences, as annual parliaments and universal suffrage are to be hereafter; for now reserve and ceremony vanished between the daughter of the Great Mogul and the Laird of Dalbracken's son, as if they had been equal and intimate from the cradle. Like children let into a new house, they seemed to run over the whole of one another's minds, exploring the range and character of new apartments of thought. A solitary colloquy between a young man and woman is seldom without result.

Water, the blandest of fluids, descending drop by drop on the head, though scarcely felt at first, will, if its percussions of slight pain be continued, finally produce the severest torture. The converse is true of equally soft words which, expressive singly of no more than good will, falling in like succession on a predisposed heart from the lips of one of different sex, may aggregate sensations of happiness, mingled with desire to possess the giver, to an intensity that shall admit love in all its madness. Jehanara and Dalbracken wilfully exposed themselves to these dangerous influences. The sequel will disclose how differently they felt while both lost to some extent the use of reason. Oriental courtship is short as the tropical twilight. The passion for another once kindled in children of the sun is prepared to overleap every artificial obstacle to fruition. Yet the European in this instance had no assurance of his being particularly acceptable. Too decorous to take liberties, he had only ventured, when allowed, to lift her hand near him in order to look at the peculiarly elegant ornaments joining the rings

and bracelet, to offer the homage which western sovereigns permit ; but she checked him with the commanding words, "be respectful!" Her satisfied aspect, however, undergoing no change, she rose up and invited him to follow to the hall of mirrors. This was a charming room, having the arched roof and walls covered with small looking glasses and various ornaments interspersed. On the floor were carpets and cushions for two ; but before they had time to be seated, the voice of Chumpa from the corridor was most unwelcomely heard saying, "Lady Princess Royal, his Majesty has passed through the Lahore gate, returning from Shalimar." Jehanara, holding her breath till it issued in a long and deep sigh, stood motionless for a time with both hands pressing her breast. Then throwing her arms round Dalbracken, and resting her head on his shoulder as a sister might embrace a brother whom she was about to part from for ever, the Princess shed tears of unfeigned anguish. "Say not, think not I sought to bring you to danger or death," cried she. "Oh ! believe not so ; my soul loves you !" Such an avowal from such a personage drove out of his mind every thought of peril and self-preservation ; while freed from restraint, he omitted no demonstrations of tenderness or entreaties not to harbour fears on his account. The cause of her alarm and apprehension did not transpire till long afterwards ; but she knew what the object of anxiety did not, that Shah Jehan would approach by the only way admitting of retreat from her abode. Another warning sound rising in the opposite corner of the outer court, and repeated by the former monitress, apprised them of the Emperor's proximity to the Asylum of Purity. Thus awakened to the necessity of acting promptly, the royal damsel adjusting her hair and veil, led Dalbracken to a narrow staircase, and said in his ear, "Go up to the top, turn to the right, enter the room there, bolt the door ; and, remember, stir not from thence till I come to release you."

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**JAMES.**—How is it that a stateswoman like the Princess Jehanara is so childishly given to play with paper kites and pigeons ?

**BROWNIE.**—Ladies of all ages, and not a few gray beards of the other sex in India, pass much of their time in flying kites and pigeons. Their "house-tops," as called in Scripture, being flat, terraced, and parapetted, the women resort to them in the cool of the evening, where they can gambol about unseen by strangers. The flocks of pigeons being carefully trained to obey signals, dart up, dive down, go east, west, south, or north, in obedience to the motion of a small flag waved by the owners of

the birds. There are many beautiful varieties of the pigeon in the East, never seen in Europe. A dame profoundly skilled in making signals will sometimes seduce a rare set of them from a neighbour, and thereby disturb the harmony of families.

The natives of India call the paper kite, as you do, a dragon. They are often splendidly gilt and painted. When the strings of two kites cross in the air, a fight is demanded by the gazing public, and imposed on the proprietors as a point of honour. To prepare for this contingency, the string is generally covered with pounded glass attached to it by glue. The battle is fought by making the strings saw each other until one is cut through, when the vanquished kite falls to the ground, and belongs to him who can catch it first.

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### CHAPTER XXXIII.

MUTUAL love between man and woman is both the keenest and most pure sensation of pleasure belonging to their nature. What wonder then that young people, forgetting sage maxims, should commit follies to enjoy it? Shall they be reprobated for employing stratagem, and exerting ingenuity to contravene the arbitrary decrees of human creatures, who seek to take away the best gift of the Creator? Those who concede the power of doing evil, and they who deny the privilege of loving honestly, to royalty, are all, though in different degrees, unfriendly to humanity. My business, however, is with historical facts. The interruption of Dalbracken's interview furnishes a remarkable proof of the insufficiency of human foresight to regulate events. No stateswoman could devise better precautions than Jehanara had taken on this occasion. Her imperial father was seven miles distant; Dalbracken reported sick at home. She herself, in the opinion of all Delhi, had just passed through the Lahore Gate towards the holy man's residence, with a long train of sedans and covered thrones. Yet the eyes of the citizens were directed to a wheel carriage, which they understood her Highness, though always invisible, generally preferred. Now I am bound to state, on account of the prominent part which she had in this transaction, that no princess of eastern race has ever had a more faithful maid of honour than Lady Motee. Though not quite so fair as the *pearl*, whence she took her title, her ladyship's person, tangible of course by her own sex, was compared to a sack of down for its comely obesity. She possessed ready wit, and easy elocution above all compeers, and an intelligence apparently intuitive, of whatever would please *the mistress* whom she at present represented. But conducted

by one of so many accomplishments, the equipage had scarcely cleared the zig-zag passage outside of the drawbridge, when her cattle were confronted by the state elephant, unaccountably and most unseasonably bearing the Emperor in from Shalimar. On seeing the two Nagore oxen come snorting along in the leading carriage, the huge uplifter of monarchs sent a shrill yell through his proboscis, which made them dash from the road in full career and upset the vehicle, crushing its splendid canopy to pieces. Hearing the inmate scream, Shah Jehan descended instantly to succour his favourite daughter, and pulled from the wreck, not the Lady Jehanara, but her fat and terrified deputy. Motee, being fortunately little hurt, told her sovereign an excellent story, which could not fail to please, since it was replete with the essence of poetry. Meanwhile Dalbracken, so long the imaginary, now the real lover of Jehanara, thinking of nothing but her fond expressions, seemed altogether unconscious of the vengeance which might impend on him for violating the female sanctuary. "*You know my soul loves you;*" "*Mine eye's delight, my heart's repose.*" What a beautiful language is the Persian, how entrancing are such words, from the lips of such beauty in distress for me!" In this absorbing reverie he reached the top of the flight of steps, and turned to the *left* instead of the right. A group of startled women, amongst whom he stood, first admonished him of his irreparable deviation from the Princess's instructions. A couple of elderly persons first accosted him. "God is greatest! Who brought you here? Whose gallant are you! Speak! speak!" said they whispering. "'Tis a thief!" "'Tis a madman!" cried others, keeping at a respectful distance. All then exchanged searching looks, seemingly to impeach one another. The verbal responses were rather less satisfactory to the intruder. "He must be killed and hidden."—"Yes! cut into little bits and thrown out at the lattice work!"—"Or cast bodily into the old well!" These observations bringing the cavern to mind, determined him to take a hint from one of them, and be mad forthwith. So falling at the feet of the ugliest old woman, he began thus: "Illustrious and most valorous king, behold the eunuch Abel Namurd, who, after sleeping seven hundred years on Mount Caff, has just awakened, and come hither in pursuit of the malignant genius called Belchfire, now taking refuge in your Majesty's dominions."—"Take him away. God's oath! how I am frightened. Take him away!" cried the beldam. "He's mad!"—"Ah, he's mad!" responded several, receding from him. But a less timid hussy of twenty five, laying hold of Abel's whispers, humorously intimated her doubts of his story, but shewed that the rest might approach him with safety. Thus encouraged, the young brood gathered round to criticise his looks. "Holy prophet, what an odd face—he is surely from Caff or some far away mountain!"—"Look, his eyes are like a cat's!"—"Such funny little things they are!"—"Oh!

somebody has pushed them too far into his head!"—"Ay, Goolaub, but look at his cheeks!"—"My God! has he not the leprosy?"—"No! no, Bunoo; the skin is so smooth, and I see blood through it."—"Lord! what makes his nose and brow so white?"—"Hear me, Pearee Jan, is not the whole countenance just like a monkey in reverse?" This sally, often repeated since by oriental wits, when severe upon Europeans, occasioned loud laughter, which the entrance of Mistress Chumpa silenced in a moment. She scolded them like one in authority, for behaving impertinently to *Sultan Dara's soothsayer*, implying in sundry interrogations that their fortune would not be at all mended by what the sage would tell his master. Next addressing him, she demanded to know whether he had strayed from the Emperor's train at the door, through absence of mind, dwelling doubtless on signs and omens, or whether any one led him the wrong way. He excupated the maids, they begged pardon, and received it. Chumpa, unrolling the coarse cloth curtain behind them, dragged the soothsayer along several passages, finally thrust him into a recess at the end of the music gallery, and locked him up to guard against future accidents.

Now this place having been constructed after a plan of the Princess's own, for accommodating the gentlemen of her band, whom it precluded from seeing or being seen, but gave egress to their sweet sounds through moon-like openings and lattice work above their heads, enabled Dalbracken to hear every word of the following colloquy.—"But, light of my eyes," said the Emperor to his daughter, "I will tell thee why I returned so hastily. Alas! my heart is oppressed, and I am sore troubled for the fate of our house. I came purposely to speak to thee, Jehanara, about the dreadful things that the great Hadji has discovered in the stars concerning Dara."—"Bestower of life," replied she, "the man is a false interpreter of the heavens, and doubtless sent here to deceive the presence with his inventions."—"Nay, my child, the Hadji is wise. He can tell not only what will be, but what men have done in their past lives."—"He has spies very probably, father, who get him the information he wants."—"Who knows? he may have demons and genii at command; but do not defend Dara, my life. We have just found out that friend of his, Darr Beg Khan, to be an infamous murderer, brought hither to stab me!"—"Oh, my father, believe not so! Darr Beg Khan an infamous murderer! How can that noble aspect, as Sadi says, adorn one that is wicked? Did not your Majesty say that he was of a noble aspect?"—"No, jewel of my soul, I never spoke of that; yet somehow thou hast guessed right. Perhaps he owes a prepossessing appearance to witchcraft, or some foul art, for he is a vile heretic!"—"What, sire, is the old man a *Sheeah*? or does his creed differ from other men's, like that of the great Akbar or Jehangeer?"—"Ah, why shouldst thou argue, my darling? thou knowest

nothing of this abandoned person. Though great in knowledge, he is of little age, and no kind of Mussulman, but an infidel entirely."—"The Emperor is just, and he will doubt these accusations without other proof. Would Shah Jehan's perception not have penetrated the worthless and unbelieving heart of the Commander of the city, and known the truth from his conversation, had the Hadji's tale been anything but a fable? Shall that fountain of lies presume to judge better than the King of kings?"—"But, Jehanara, listen to thy father: the detestable fellow's associates, in his own unbelieving land, were cut-throats and night-robbers. He had taken refuge in a den of thieves whence he was dragged, and sent out to Hindostan, instead of being hanged for a murder committed by him."—"Ah me! an assassination? does your Majesty mean that he is an assassin?"—"What else, child? He has confessed that he never was a soldier till he took the field in Guzerat. Nay, all that I tell thee of him has been confirmed by his own lips. Pearl of my age, thou shouldest have more faith in the good Hadji. 'O Emperor! said he to me, 'to prove that which I read in the heavens, send ten wise men even unto Darr Beg Khan; let them interrogate that unbeliever on what I affirm of him. He will not wholly deny the truth; perhaps he may disguise it by sophistry. If so, bid the wise men then put this talisman into his right hand, and they will behold his conscience stricken as with a thunderbolt. May his Majesty judge by what shall come to pass whether his servant speaks truth.'" The old man here added an exaggerated account of the actual occurrences at the visit paid by the High Priest and his friends to Dalbracken. The pretended talisman was the letter to Adeline. The facts thus adduced to make the chief supporter of Dara's cause an object of fear and aversion to her father, certainly gave the Princess concern on more accounts than she chose to explain. So artfully had they been interwoven, too, with that superstition which now swayed the feeble mind of Shah Jehan, that she never found him so obstinate on any subject before. Still she insisted that the condign punishment which he threatened should be delayed until both sides were heard. Her elder brother's character ought, she maintained, to protect both him and his friends from the imputation of having recourse to unworthy practices now, hitherto abhorrent to his nature.—"Guardian of my helplessness," concluded the Princess, "the pillars of Heaven will crash under their weight, ere Dara employ an assassin against his father!" The Emperor having ever entertained a true affection for his eldest son, paused some time, and then reverted to his suspicious representative.—"But, child of my beloved, I have not yet mentioned what would make one credit anything about such an impure being: that Darr Beg Khan eats pork!"—"Pork? swine's flesh? Ah my God!" cried Jehanara, wiping her lips, and spitting till she retched. The young lady's orthodox horror



proving to her father the force of his arguments, he began to laugh at its excess.—“Ha! ha! my nursling of innocence, why, thou shudderest as if the hog-eater’s breath had fanned thy cheeks. Again! Nay thou couldst not shew more disgust were he to pollute thy lips! But fear not. Dare he even look at the outer gate of these forbidden precincts? He shall be trodden under my elephants, or sent a packing as thou shalt desire, Jehanara. Meanwhile I go to countermand Dara’s coronation, and we will take the Hadji’s advice about further proceedings.” Not one word did the Princess utter in opposition to these proposals; and the Emperor retired, fully bent on ruining Dalbracken, as well as undoing whatever he had done for his master.

I shall make no attempt to pourtray the state of a man’s mind whose prospects of love and ambition were so fatally reversed in the space of one hour. All became still as death around him. Daylight gradually disappeared, still no one came to open his prison door, and lead him to explain misconceptions and hostile plots to the Imperial beauty. The happy and thoughtless girls were running to the roof over head, and there playing, delighted with their pigeons and paper-kites. Can Jehanara be among them, thought he, purposely leaving me in this painful uncertainty and apprehension? The door opened, but not, alas, to reveal his shrined and loathing idol! It was Chumpu who spoke, desiring him in a peremptory tone to come along. When he went near, in order to say something confidentially, “Hush!” cried she, “don’t make a noise, nor breathe either, upon clean people! Ha! have not his feet polluted enough of this house already?—Swine-eater, wah!” Though these reproaches were thrown out as if in murmurs to herself, he knew them to be intended for insults; and that the only way to impress Indian servants with respect, is to treat them haughtily. “Insolent hag!” said he, “you have been eaves-dropping, I find, and presume to lie as impudently as those who have deceived the Emperor. Hold your peace, or expect the punishment that awaits them!” Mistress Chumpu, wheeling about, with a few interjections, became more respectful than she had ever been before; and he got safe home.

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JAMES.—How comes it that the Princess thought Mr Malcolm’s countenance comely to behold, seeing that her handmaids made sport and fun thereof?

BROWNIE.—I state the fact, James; philosophers may explain it. The upper and lower classes of people in India frequently form opposite opinions of European faces at this day. Princes often covet your countrywomen, while their menials loath *them* as leprous abominations.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

DALBRACKEN's affairs, even his life, were again in a most critical situation. No doubt remained in his mind that a desperate and well-conducted plot existed, though both he and the Princess had been deluded into thinking otherwise. From a state of credulous security, he began to suspect treachery in his own household, and, I lament to record, not altogether without reason. Bahadur Ally, a pattern of preceptors in England, never obtaining that control over his pupil which appeared his due, still considered himself an eminent example of suffering worth. He notwithstanding did a little business amidst the general corruption of Mandoo. But being now in his native city, *the roots of fortune were in the water*, according to the phraseology of his thoughts. Dalbracken, having desired him to make enquiry among his acquaintances how the citizens stood affected to the heir-apparent, and of course to give information if he heard of any inimical schemes, the learned secretary did not forego an opportunity of serving himself. In short, he got introduced as the chief spy to most of the great men, and received incredible sums as presents to conceal truths or report falsehoods. The faithful performance of his promises, particularly to three of the ten wise men, coming out in evidence, now led the commander of the city to believe his secretary in league with them. Aware, however, that nothing but the torture could extort a confession from him, or any native so implicated, he resorted to other means. The reasons assigned by the venerable Syud, Gazi-o-Deen, for frequenting the house, had never appeared thoroughly satisfactory. The absence of positive good rather than the presence of evil in the man's deportment, kept him always from being a favourite; but his intimacy with the Hadji above all things now rendered his reverence the next object of suspicion. Recollecting that hypochondriacal terror of death which used to make Gazi a fund of amusement to idle youths in the camp, Dalbracken conceived the design of converting it into an instrument of political discovery. The only Asiatic fit to be entrusted with the secret seemed Azim Khan, whom severe sickness had prevented from accompanying the Prince. He and Davy Kirkland, who, since the beginning of his master's viceroyalty, commanded the body-guard, were therefore selected to assist in the undertaking. The young Mogul entering eagerly into the scheme, volunteered, before being asked, to take a part, expecting to enjoy the exhibition as well as to benefit the heir-apparent's cause. These two, smearing over their naked bodies with an ointment of red hooly powder and pounded charcoal, giving the person a ghastly livid hue, each buckled a pair of large paper kites of the same colour on his shoulders. Then arming themselves,

one with a club, painted to look red hot, the other brandishing a monstrous crooked cimeter, they rehearsed for an hour, and then entered on the stage to enact an original scene in diplomacy.

Gazi-o-Deen, having taken his wonted dose of opium, lay, to betoken humility of spirit, on the floor of his remote room in noiseless sleep beside a luxurious bed which he disdained to use. A solitary lamp burnt in a corner, and stretched across the threshold of the door—his servant was snoring vigorously. Clapping one hand on this happy person's mouth, Davy bore away the body in his armpit, and gave him in charge to a sentry. They next proceeded to place the bedstead over the sleeper, covering it with a large black cloth which fell to the ground on all sides, excepting at one end which was now raised up and supported on tripods to the height of a man. The light, removed likewise to a suitable position, remained ready to illuminate what they desired Gazi to see whenever he should awake. The preparations were completed by laying two bags of moistened saltpetre, joined in the middle, across his thighs, to prevent an abrupt or premature resurrection. Now, be it known to the uninitiated, that this narrow house represented the grave, into which two of the confederates presently entering, threw a shroud upon the unconscious tenant, and then stood erect at the open end in the characters of Mokhir and Nekhir. These are the interrogating angels, or inquisitors of the dead, whom every good Mussulman believes to visit the tomb three days after a person's interment. Their office is to assign the deceased appropriate quarters in the other world, which they determine by a rigorous investigation of the various actions of his past life. The most delicate part of the present enquiry being to maintain pretensions to omniscience, while making the self-convicting witness supply the required information, it had been duly studied. The club of Nekhir (Mr Kirkland to wit) resounded in vain on the buttocks of the Syud. Dalbracken, standing on one side to observe and prompt the procedure, for fear of hurting him, directed a bit of burning match to be applied to the nostrils, which instantly broke the slumberer's death-like rest. He recognised the shroud—the cold grasp of death on his limbs—and the forms of the heavenly inquisitors, the beings who had so long haunted his imagination in day dreams of terror.

It were far beneath the dignity of sober history to delineate the grimaces and contortions of face, or to enumerate the rueful groans of the poor hypochondriac at this moment. But truth being imperatively demanded of the impartial historian, I shall not shrink from giving an accurate report of the proceedings which followed.

*Mokhir.*—(Azim Khan) soul of Gazi-o-Deen of Ahmedabad! thou has rested three days in this tomb: prepare to answer for the manifold crimes of thy life on earth.

*Gazi.*—Allah! Allah! God is greatest, there is no God but God, and Mahommed—

*Mokhir.*—Cease to pray! thy prayers are heard no longer. Ex-

plain thy sojourn in the tents of the wicked, even in the city of Shah Jehan.

*Gazi*.—Mercy! Pardon! Sublimest angels, I went there ye know, to avenge the Prophet's blood, because my brother was slaughtered, and all our wealth taken away. Ah! Ah!

*Nekhir*.—(Flourishing his club). Expound!

*Gazi*.—Hoi! Hoi! spare me, ministers of Heaven, who know all things! When the pious Prince Aurungzeb said, Go serve my cause faithfully, even as Meer Khan shall direct, and I promise thee justice, this poor dead creature obeyed and followed Meer Khan, who was called Hadji, to Delhi.

*Mokhir*.—Meer Khan?

*Nekhir*.—(Threatening as before). Expound!

*Gazi*.—Oh! oh! Woe is me! What shall I say to appease ye, righteous judges? When Meer Khan was defeated by the Infidels in Guzerat, and assuming the pilgrim's stole, became the great Hadji in the city of inherited empire, this defunct slave was one of his assistants in pulling down the bulwarks of unbelieving Dara, in order to exalt orthodoxy, by raising the devout Aurungzeb highest in the firmament of power.

*Mokhir*.—Thou didst lodge the while under the roof of Dara's friends, calling them thy friends: how could such behaviour support orthodoxy?

*Gazi*.—Magnificent seraph, it is known that my business there was to gain information of the things done, and to bring destruction on the greatest commander among the heretics.

*Nekhir*.—Expound!

*Gazi*.—Mother of my race (Fatima), O avert the wrath of the terrible inquisitor! Did this miserable being not watch the outgoings and ingoings of Darr Beg Khan, noting the things which he said and performed, that I might tell them all to the Hadji? Again, after the Princess Roshenara tried in vain to win him to battle for us, when she foamed with exceeding rage, who but poor Gazi made the effort to poison him with pawn? Yea, I did so, transcendent spirits, just before her Highness endeavoured for the last time to allure Dara's champion to her chamber, that he might there be seized, put into a bag, as foxes are, and transmitted to Dowlatabad in the Deccan, agreeably to the Hadji's counsel. But I would have got nightshade put into the Infidel's food, had the holy pilgrim not been silent when I proposed it. Alack-a-day! I am dead, and can do no more good now! but mine intentions to exterminate him were pious. O reward me, ye keepers of the gates of paradise!

*Mokhir*.—Soul of Gazi-o-Deen, who committed usury throughout his youth, neglecting many of the five prayers daily, nothing could enable thee with such a load of iniquities on thy head to cross the bridge no broader than a hair, spanning the gulf of hell; nothing could have saved thee but a conspicuous part in the great work of degrading Prince Dara, and exalting Aurungzeb. Thou claimest no share in the merit of forming alliances, mustering armies, and seducing friends from the enemy?

*Gazi.*—Justice! justice! mighty arbiters of the dead. Went I not from chief to chief in the city, saying, Sultan Suja is with us, the Princes join forces in the West,—when the gates of the city are in possession of our friends,—when the old Emperor is safely imprisoned in Selimghur,—when the Lady Jehanara is secured, and Darr Beg Khan with his adherents taken or cut off—then will the hosts of the true faith march to the capital, making the empire ours! Agents of light! I did all these things, and are not a thousand others recorded in the grand volume of letters, written by the pious son of kings, and by the Hadji?

*Mokhir.*—"Volume of letters?"

*Nekhir.*—Expound!

*Gazi.*—Ah! ah! Letters, scrolls, papers,—this wretched creature, when alive, knew not the celestial names of the documents received and transmitted in hollow bamboos by the hands of wandering priests and holy mendicants: I mean those now locked up in the unapproachable leather case of the Hadji, which lies continually within the pale of the revered hair of the Prophet's beard and other relics, at the Grand Mosque. In that place, ye know, protectors of the good, all is reposed in writing, which this perished creature has pleaded in his defence, and all that men know concerning the holy war. Ah! alack! Hoi! hoi! what further can I do? Ministers of justice, consign my poor soul to peace!

The evidence thus elicited from the poor dead creature was tolerably decisive: yet as those who heard it were undoubted partisans, they would not obtain belief, in the present humour of the Court. The seizure of "the unapproachable leather case," so pregnant with intelligence, therefore became a measure of extreme importance. The Juma Musjeed, or Grand Mosque, with its appurtenances, forms a quadrangle enclosed with a high wall, having a door in each of three faces, which are shut at night. The pale of the revered hair is in a chamber on one side of the principal building, so sacred that none but priests are allowed to enter it. The Emperor himself, wont to inspect that relic of Mahommed once a year, sits reverently outside while it is brought before him. Having no sacerdotal adherents at hand in whom he could trust, the commander of the city thus saw the prime agent and the magazine of sedition entrenched, as it were, within a spot which the secular arm could not invade without committing sacrilege. Success, however, might justify an act which would otherwise excite tumult and insurrection. To him, in the present crisis, inaction and failure were equally productive of ruin. He resolved accordingly to capture the documentary proofs of treason.

Azim Khan and Kirkland, returning from the bath where they had been washing off the livid hues of the inquisitors, were apprised of his resolution. Davy selected twenty-five Rajpoots from the guard, armed with swords, who followed Dalbracken as if patrolling the streets, till they reached the mosque at the midnight hour of prayer. His object was first to take possession of the papers, and then of the Hadji's person. Posting a few of the small

party at each entrance, to prevent any one's escape, the two Europeans fenced by the swords of four idolaters, traversed the marble-paved court, and, to the consternation of the faithful, broke into the holy of holies. The ever-burning lamps revealed an elegant French portfolio, on which Dalbracken seized with feverish delight. In vain did the Rajpoots, made officious by fear, suggest instant retreat. He went close to the light, and, not asking for the key, ripped up part of the depository. Out rolled a bundle of documents which, whatever their celestial names, restored the finder, in imagination at least, to his high station, and dearer far dearer still, the affection of Jehanara! "Now for the villain, this Hadji himself!" But they had scarcely moved in the direction of his usual residence, on the opposite side of the square, when an uproar was heard at one of the doors. The conqueror of the Carnatic, the discomfited Lieutenant of Guzerat, the great Hadji, seeing his last elaborate system of deception and intrigue detected by his old rival, had knocked down one of the guards and run away! Immediate orders were despatched to every post in the city to take him up. But long before morning he reached the Turkomaun gate, commanded by one of his friends, a traitor, who fled with him towards the Deccan.

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JAMES.—What is meant by the city of Inherited Empire?

BROWNIE.—Delhi. The original is *Dar-ool-Caleefat*. Agra is called *Dar-ool-Sooltanat*. The city of sovereignty.

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## CHAPTER XXXV.

No portfolio ever contained the records of a more refined system of treason and iniquity than that of the fugitive Hadji disclosed on examination. The papers were all most accurately arranged in separate facicles, each of which was duly numbered and indorsed. One document, which demanded instant attention, seemed the original of a circular, bearing the names of thirty noblemen of the highest station to whom copies had been furnished. It gave concise directions to all the traitors to co-operate at the third watch of the night, two days later: First, in seizing and imprisoning Shah Jehan in a gaol of the imperial family, situated on an island in the Jumna: simultaneously removing the Princess Jehanara and forty-two ladies of the blood royal, "alive if possible," from Delhi: and taking captive or despatching Darr Beg Khan and ninety-three officers. Second, to secure the public treasury. Third, to gain possession of all the gates, and immediately to put the city in a state of defence.

What next transpired continued to establish the general correctness of Dara's information and opinion. Aurungzeb, knowing that the treasure to be thus secured was sufficient for his ulterior objects,

directed Meer Khan to assume his military rank, and in conjunction with Roshenara to make the old Emperor invite him to the capital, and finally, on his arrival, to create him, instead of Dara, joint Sovereign of the Moguls. The fate of Akbar the Second, perhaps become as necessary to the agent as the principal in these vigorous measures, was thus, agreeably to Eastern policy, very intelligibly decided. The treaty, promising amity and support to Sultan Suja, lay at full length under the detailed particulars of the foregoing plot. That Prince, as enjoined, had agreed to march with the whole force of Bengal into the Doab. This territory, lying between the Ganges and Jumna, cuts off the communication of the two capital cities with the eastern provinces of the empire. The early occupation of it were therefore a most important acquisition to a competitor. Aurungzeb, on his part, stipulated not only gravely but solemnly to move as an humble auxiliary with the army of the Deccan into a parallel line on the opposite or western side of the Jumna. He promised to make the "Baby Morad" also co-operate by feigning submission to him, until the junction of all their forces before the capital should render it safe to avow the sentiments of his heart, and proclaim Suja emperor. In addition to this unequivocal testimony, several explanatory letters to the confidential agent attested and illustrated the amount of the crafty dissembler's guilt. Nor was the treason of his adherents left in doubt. Meer Khan, with a sagacity worthy of his master, had made all the thirty sign a bond, not as usual, by affixing signets, to be disavowed if convenient, but with their autographs, which effectually deterred them from sacrificing his enterprize to their wonted trimming and vacillating disposition.

Having ascertained these facts, Dalbracken, apprehensive that despair might impel the parties to raise an immediate commotion, on hearing of their detection, resolved to secure their persons without delay. But to guard against further misrepresentations, he at the same time sent an intimation of his intentions to the Emperor, through his daughter's chamberlain. This communication was couched in the following terms :—

"A miraculous discovery has been made of a conspiracy, unmatched in wickedness, to dethrone the King of kings, to massacre, or drag in captivity from the city, the lady Jehanara and all the friends of the heir-apparent. Darr Beg Khan, at this moment, is taking measures to avert the threatened danger from his Majesty and the empire. This servant of the state will crave permission, after day-break, to unfold to the presence how Prince Aurungzeb is now convicted by his own hand writing, of inciting two brothers to rebel with him ; one from the West to fight parricidal battles by his side ; one from the East to effect a powerful diversion in favour of the atrocious design, whereof the detected plot is part, which he, the Lord of the Deccan, has conceived in his heart to sweep from the earth every living being between him and the peacock throne."

These vague declarations, read first by the Princess and then by *the Emperor*, had the desired effect of exciting both alarm and

curiosity. Posting a body of troops at each gate of the palace, the commander of the city proceeded to place guards over the houses of the traitors, and kept the force at head quarters under arms till morning. Not a drop of blood was shed. As soon as leave could be obtained, he went to the hall of twelve doors, where Jehanara, behind the curtain, inspected his budget. He felt new satisfaction in thinking his personal influence with her not quite extinguished, when she approved of his proposal to pardon the conspirators, on their swearing to behave well in future, and giving hostages.—“Let his lordship keep the bond,” said her Highness, “and treat these base nobles as he thinks best, without informing his Majesty or the heir-apparent of their guilt.” Such was Shah Jehan’s horror of being deposed, imprisoned, and, what he thought a certain adjunct, blinded, that every one of the convicted noblemen would undoubtedly have been executed had the discoverer not erased, or rather obliterated, their names on the back of the circular. He became quite satisfied, however, when he saw the care taken to secure the allegiance of those who were suspected of abetting the rebellion. Let no one suppose that Dalbracken, at this time of day, valued an Indian oath. But knowing some degree of shame to be still attached to perjury, he caused the traitors to subscribe with their hands and seals a solemn renunciation of Aurungzeb’s cause, and further imprecating infamy on their families, and death to their offspring, if they failed to support Dara in time to come. Yet he did infinitely more to insure the fidelity of these men, by getting their wives and children sent to reside within the fortifications of the palace during the war, now inevitable.

Dalbracken, once more from the abyss of disgrace, ascended to the pinnacle of favour and of popularity with his party. The singular process by which so many momentuous secrets were extorted, was praised by the politic, and admired by the witty of Shahjehanabad. Poor Gazi, forgiven on account of his lineage, wretched appearance, and, not least, because he did good by compulsion, wherever children desried him in the street, was called on to *expound*. At a full court, assembled on purpose, the venerable monarch gave munificent proofs of his gratitude. Dalbracken was invested with an honour of the highest dignity, called Mahimuratib, which authorized him to display a fish on the end of the staff above his banner. Laying both hands on his head, the Emperor then declared him the safeguard of the state, *The protector of Kings*, the title which he bore from that day. An order at the same time was publicly issued to give him twenty laks, two hundred thousand pounds, of the treasure which had been saved by his energetic measures.

Preparations for Dara’s inauguration recommenced with renewed vigour. His favoured servant had presently the real satisfaction of recalling the Prince, in Shah Jehan’s name, to receive the reward of his worth and filial piety in becoming an Emperor whilst his father lived. At any former period of his life, Dalbracken would have enjoyed this exaltation with a proud sense of delight; but his heart



was never so forlorn as now, because he had reason to believe himself an object of disgust to the Princess. Inclination luckily concurring for once with what was excellent policy in him as a public servant, he solicited permission to make an offering to her Highness of one-half of his splendid donation from the throne. The present was, in appearance, graciously accepted; yet, neither this substantial manifestation of good will, his recent services to herself, her family and country, nor a most honourable acquittal by the Emperor, could cleanse him from the imputation of eating pig! The young lady herself, however, was not less afflicted by an intestine warfare carried on between her heart and judgment. There are, in all parts of the world, some misdeeds of which it is almost as fatal to be accused as convicted. Murder and atheism, though by no means recommendations, might be overlooked or softened by explanation, in the opinion of a Mogul Princess; but could any gentleman be asked whether he had committed the degrading abomination of eating hog's flesh? Or, were it supposable that he had done so, was his word or oath any evidence to the contrary? Certainly not. Jehanara knew no more than her admirer could discover respecting the origin of this foul charge, nor could she devise the means of refuting it until assisted by her only privy councillor, Mistress Chumpa. Though this observant person had no experience of such practices, she philosophically inferred, that whereas sound believers have fowlers to catch wild-fowl and game as delicacies, and gardeners to furnish fruit, so will the unclean entertain swine-catchers to pick up the starvling grunterns, to be seen acting as scavengers in the suburbs. She, therefore, proposed to ascertain whether the accused employed such provider in his household establishment. "Why, Chumpa," replied her mistress, "he may get small bits from the venders. Do you think he dines on a whole sow, as we should eat an apple?"—"Ha, madam, her Highness always laughs at me—but orders! Order me to send for the cook, and I will find out every thing that the Viceroy eats—I will." This suggestion pleased better, and the old woman was duly commissioned to draw information from the fountain-head of dietetic knowledge, by a judicious course of interrogation and cross-questioning. Did not the dreadful scenes about to open make me feel too grave already, I should like to give the particulars of the interview which took place as projected. The head of Dalbracken's culinary department obeyed the summons of Mistress Chumpa, and waited upon her. I do not mean the fellow or fellows, impiously neglectful of ablutions, who, unturbaned and naked above the dirty trousers, operate in the smoke of the kitchen. I speak of the well-dressed, sleek, big-bellied domestic, who levies an income-tax from the wages of subordinates, cheats his master of charcoal and fire-wood, and, receiving from the steward all the provisions to be dressed, retails a proportion, seldom exceeding one-half, in the market, to his own great emolument. This comfortable personage was known among his friends by the style and title of *Caleefa*, Caliph, the very same which satisfied the

theocratic sovereigns of Bagdad. Having fortunately been entertained at Mandoo, he never beheld Mr Guttlethorpe in his glory. Chumpa, perceiving him a dull character, quite capable of being entrapped, pretended that her mistress, desirous of sending a superb dinner to his master, entirely suited to that great man's taste, and, hearing the renown of his cook, had called him to demand his advice on the occasion. The renowned cook, raising both hands to his forehead for the recognition of his abilities, and anticipating handsome pickings, offered his personal services. She then begged a particular enumeration of the Lord Darr Beg Khan's favourite dishes. It was given very minutely, yet nothing suspicious transpired. Cross-questioning followed in vain. "Wah!" said she, "these are things that our own cooks can prepare. Have you no far-country dishes, or what the godly among us don't eat?"—"None."—"Nonsense, good Caliph. We all know he drinks wine."—"That was not under his care; but how could my Lord do so, since he was never seen drunk?"—"Well," cried she snappishly, thinking to take him by surprise. "Be pleased to tell me who cooks the pork that Darr Beg Khan eats every day? The worthy man, lifting hands and eyes to Heaven," declared the assertion to be a calumny unworthy of so respectable a lady, from which his own immaculate character as a cook ought to protect a master, who, so far from being a Pagan idolater, prone to unclean feeding, had no objection to a bit of beef. Her respectable ladyship knew, as well as he, that there were just two religions in the world—Mussulman and Hindoo. If he eat beef, madam, how can he possibly be an infidel who eats pig's flesh?"

Whether the Caliph's facts or arguments did most, need not be enquired. Chumpa became a staunch believer in Dalbracken's innocence, and converted her mistress to the same faith. What remained now to deter them from rushing into one another's arms, to realise the promises of youth and love? Alas! they could not avow themselves husband and wife while Shah Jehan lived. Their intercourse, if known, must appear criminal; and, as such, in a country where the eye of a man unprivileged disgraces a woman, they must steal to every meeting with more circumspection than the midnight thief, surrounded by a thousand dangers of detection, shame, and death. Of this peril Dalbracken had a very vague conception, till the circumstances attending his two clandestine visits to the Palace opened his eyes. But when distressed about the Princess's aversion to him, he did not reflect on serious objections which ought to exist on his part to enter forbidden places on forbidden errands. There was something in the act from which his inherent pride, and his friendship for Dara, revolted; yet that which romantic and ambitious hopes urged him to solicit, when partially ignorant—a fondness approaching infatuation at one moment, and feelings like adoration at another, now prompted him to do again. In a word, his whole soul and heart were enslaved by Jehanara. Like a genius to the magician, he was the slave of her wish. The Princess heard

his scruples, and wept to think them too reasonable, for she did not yet perceive her power to command him. Where there is a will, however, there is a way, and womankind know how to find it. Jehanara had a beautiful villa, long vanished, about a mile north of the walls of Delhi, close to the Jumna where the bank is highest. It contained, like most others, a suite of subterranean apartments. A door being struck through the intervening wall and earth, now established a direct communication between them and the bed of the river, at an unfrequented spot. The *souterraine* thus improved, from which all but Chumpa were rigorously excluded, being magnificently furnished, was destined presently to be their marriage-bower. The Princess presented the young Georgian with a barge exactly like one of her own. Both of these continued to glide every evening along the stream, passing and repassing between the two houses, of which the inmates were known to have constant business. As Mariam took eagerly to this amusement of sailing, the world did not suspect the purpose which it was contrived for. Yet the lovers met seldom, nor could they ever share the calm and secure fruition of wedded life, which in youthful hearts is too apt to cloy, when disappointing past hope, and excluding expectation of happiness to come, it gradually throws the mind into torpid indifference. But their interviews, rare and brief, still passed in mutual transport. The long intervals were full of the doubts and fears, and rapturous anticipations of uncertain courtship.

Notwithstanding vague reports, of a favourable kind to Dalbracken's thoughts, a dark cloud, whether charged with blasting thunder or genial showers he knew not, hung over their union; and that was the opinion of the future Emperor concerning this unequal alliance. For some reason the Princess exacted a promise from him not to divulge the secret, even to Dara, during her father's life.

A passage in one of the Prince's odes filled Dalbracken with grave forebodings, though it was not conclusive. The royal bard singing of the suit of an aspiring mortal to a Purree (which means a "winged being," but is usually translated fairy), gives her answer as follows:—

"The nightingale may fall in love with the rose, for she like himself is a thing of the earth; but dare he soar through glowing ether to woo the queen star of night?" The nightingale might here typify a poet, whom Dara considered at least equal to a soldier, and the queen star, or planet Venus, a lady of the royal family.

In all countries men fancy a reformer bent on changing everything for the sake of change. Dara, in reality, had no wish to dispel the prejudice in favour of royalty, or even nobility, though he desired to see both more worthy of respect.

This Prince having returned from Ajmeer, his inauguration immediately took place. Delhi never beheld a day of equal magnificence. Her thousand palaces poured forth the long processions of nobles; continued streams flowed from encampments on the surrounding fields, through her gates, to the imperial presence. In the

great hall of audience, Shah Jahan, arrayed in all the splendour of his station, sat on the peacock throne. It was so named from the figures of four birds of that kind surmounting the canopy, formed of diamonds and precious stones of various colours to represent the plumage. This seat being all of equally costly materials, contained valuables to the amount of six millions sterling. From his place where he stood on the right hand as heir-apparent, Dara ascended another canopied throne erected by the side of his father's. An edict of the Emperor was then proclaimed declaring his eldest son an equal in title, dignity, and power. The magnates of the empire moved forward in succession to tender their offerings as earnest of allegiance and fidelity. Every man seemed full of resolution to live and die in defence of Dara Shah. Cannon thundered—fire-works traversed the sky—the whole atmosphere, to the visible horizon, undulated with sounds of joy and loyalty. I turn with abhorrence from the baseness and cold-blooded treachery of the chief actors in this scene. A long farewell to days of love and peace, and the harmless vagaries of men! I must proceed to relate all the crimes comprised in war, and, like other historians, follow the hell hounds now about to be slipped from the leash, with the exultation of a hunter. It is to be observed that my object in recording most events is to let mortal readers feel as mortal actors did. I have not, like mere human creatures, a reputation to establish or guard. A literary Brownie is, therefore, far more independent than retired scholars or clergymen, condemned in their own opinion to the inglorious exercise of mind, who to prove themselves men of spirit, possessed of heroism, which, though dormant, claims fellow-feeling with the truly great, are obliged to write and preach eloquently in praise of slaughter. But let no martial friend, in mistaken kindness, suppose me fond of battles because I describe them. I have looked upon men enjoying, and seen them destroying one another; from the Indian Caucasus to the banks of the Seine. After ample experience, I am decidedly partial to the sight of their happiness; and in that state I know human nature is tending to the perihelion of its course.

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## CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE combined armies of the Deccan and Guzerat, elate with hopes of successful rebellion, confiscation, pillage, promotion, and new dignities, lay in anxious expectation of the signal to march. Aurungzeb's troops were fully and excellently equipped. He had funds also to maintain them three years in the field, independently of his present revenues. Morad's men were in the best possible

fighting order ; but since his treasury contained not a single rupee, it depended somewhat upon circumstances against whom they were to draw their swords. His brother, pleading inability to remove these embarrassments, took care to promote them secretly, knowing that their continuance kept Akbar the Second entirely under his control. He intended, however, to subsist this part of the force on its way to the capital, when he should have a certain prospect of being received there as a master.

But the appalling intelligence now reached him that his adherents were arrested, his long-practised dissimulation detected, and no longer available, while his best of agents, flying from Delhi, gave notice that no resource remained to him but open war. Morad called loudly to arms, and could hardly be restrained from proceeding, though the Imperial treasury no longer invited his warriors to move, trusting to plunder by the road till they got to it. Aurungzeb, resolving to begin operations by capturing the castle of Surat, in which there was a considerable sum of money, tried to make his fiery coadjutor wait for the arrival of the fugitive Meer Khan, whose great knowledge of gunnery would soon put the place in their possession. Morad, who expressed a strong inclination to hang this former favourite, no sooner heard of the sinews of war being at a spot which he could reach unassisted, than he insisted on setting off to take the fortress himself. To guard against some early disaster in this attack on stone walls, Aurungzeb consented to attend the obstinate youth.

Meanwhile he sent off expresses to Sultan Suja, intreating him to put his whole forces in motion. None but he, it was again averred, could save the progeny of Timur and the Mogul throne from disgrace and extinction. The audacious usurpation, as he called the elevation of Dara, now made it the sacred duty of every son of Shah Jehan to declare war against him without delay. Suja, equally flexible and politic, with talents of a much higher order, was still practising similar deception on his brother. He calculated at present on Dara's being sufficiently engaged by the confederates in the West, to let him complete a long and difficult march, and establish his usurpation by getting possession of Delhi and Agra. As this candidate for empire now appears fairly on the stage, it will be proper to recapitulate the resources on which he depended in disputing the throne with the heir-apparent.

Sultan Suja had hitherto performed diligently the civil and military duties of an extensive province, not from any excess of philanthropy or principally to gain applause. But by promoting the prosperity of the people he sought to create wealth for the ample supply of his wants : and while thus exercising his faculties, he invigorated his constitution, mental and corporeal, to enhance the sense of recurring pleasure. His taste was elegant in all things. In him, passions ardent and lively, were under the control of a paramount understanding, which prevented their indulgence to *indecency or excess*. He drank the choice wines of Europe and

Persia as conducive to health and hilarity only, instead of following the fashion of Morad, which is still the most approved style of oriental jollity. No zealot of marble goddesses in the West ever panted more eagerly to possess them, or sent forth emissaries of taste with more success than did Prince Suja to obtain the living forms of incarnate beauty. The regions of the Caucasus, the wilds of Bucharia, the vale of Cashmere, and the *Europasian* daughters of English factors, with native damsels of darker hue, contributed variously every charm that sculpture, painting, or poetry itself can suggest to the mind, whether voluptuous, graceful, or intellectual. The places of their abode were not less profusely adorned with the attractions of art. Suja enjoying here all that Aurungzeb was authorized by the Koran to expect hereafter, derived advantages from his indifference to religion little inferior to what the other got by his bigotry, in one respect. The Moguls are *Soonees*, believing in the right of Mahommed's three first successors, in opposition to the Persians, who, considering them usurpers, assert the claim of Ali, the prophet's son-in-law. The principal families and best officers in India being either natives of Persia, or the descendants of such, Suja professed himself of their creed, and became a Sheeah. His profession of Sheahism succeeded well with the laymen; but he differed with his new divines about the meaning of universal toleration. They conceded, with perfect liberality, the unrestricted use of the word in speeches and proclamations, appealing to the practice of many pious nations to prove that it meant a monopoly of good things in this life to the orthodox and their established clergy, who were to be assisted by the secular power in taxing sectarians, preventing heterodox priests from watching the backslidings of their betters, and not less, to forbid the erection of turrets, called minarets, whence the children of error, where no bells are used, make criers call the deluded flock to prayer. Suja, begging pardon of the right reverend fathers, humbly conceived their interpretation synonymous with impolitic persecution. He accordingly threw open the door of preferment to merit, for its own sake, rewarding those most who served him best, and permitting them to have any religion or none, as they thought fit. Hence crowds of European infidels, resorting to his service, established founderies, erected fortifications, and formed for him the best train of artillery that appeared in these civil wars. His cavalry and infantry being well disciplined, clothed, armed, and officered, had an imposing aspect at a peaceful review which inspired undue confidence. But as already intimated, the very element of which these were composed constituted the irremediable inferiority of Suja's army. The common soldiers were chiefly natives of Bengal. The Prince, who had been in several battles, erroneously thought that any human creature could serve as a private. For though it be generally true that anybody may learn to play at hazard, yet if he fall into fits at the sight of a dice box, it won't do. There are likewise

some who can throw very steadily for *love*, but shake woefully when money is at stake. In like manner the heroes of Bengal, immovable in a sham fight, have never yet stood before an enemy. There is not perhaps one Bengallee at present among the British sepoys. The northern provinces and the Deccan, now, as formerly, furnish a race of Pitan, Tartar, or Persian origin, little inferior to Europeans as instruments of war.

While about to leave the seat of his government with a force of such materials, Suja, by unjustifiable, though unavoidable, acts of oppression to extort money, the more resented for being never exercised before, created disaffection in the province. His revenues having been regularly expended on works of magnificence and pleasure, there was no treasury to supply the means of equipping a hundred thousand men for a march of eight hundred miles. The merchants, bankers, and landholders, from not being drilled into Morad's system of finance, the favourite one among his countrymen, grew ripe for rebellion against a viceroy, who, after all, only took a small portion of what they had earned during a long peace under his protection. It is lamentably true of all slaves, that they bear the scourge and exactions of a tyrant with patient resignation, but refuse to meet the necessities of a benevolent Prince voluntarily, and regard coercion by him with vindictive rancour.

In this stage of the rebellion, its progress was considerably favoured by a stroke of palsy, which threatened to prove fatal to Shah Jehan. The physicians recommended his removal by water to Agra, in consequence of which his Majesty and the whole family embarked on the Jumna. Dalbracken commanded a numerous escort which occupied both banks, and kept pace with the fleet of barges and boats. Dara, whom I shall henceforth denominate the King, to distinguish him from his father, though both bore the title of *Padshah*, took measures for keeping the rebels in check until he could make head against them. Jeswunt Sing, faithful to the treaty of Oudypore, obeyed the summons, and led out his Rajpoots, reinforced by thirty thousand Moguls, to defend the passage of the Narbudda at Ugein.

Cambridge, in a visit to Dara at Ajmeer, had acquired much of the Prince's esteem on account of his various accomplishments, and recommended himself as a General, by his favourite theory of the art of war, which he illustrated by darting a small marble with sufficient force to knock away another one four-times larger. Dara, who delighted in familiar demonstrations of grave subjects, laughed, and promised him an opportunity of putting it to the test. He was accordingly appointed to oppose Suja, with the army of Allahabad, the nominal command of which, to obviate the jealousy of older officers, the King bestowed on one of his children, agreeably to a prevalent custom.

Unawed by these preparations for his reception, the Viceroy of Bengal, joining the cry of his brethren in the west, proclaimed

that the Emperor having been poisoned by his eldest son, it behoved every loyal subject and honest man to fly to arms against the parricide.

Leaving the fronts of these hostile armies gradually approximating till they come in collision, it is my duty now, relating events as they occur, to give some account of the memorable siege of Surat. Meanwhile, it is to be noted that the force of Malwa, commanded by General Bethel, covered Agra, and was ready from its central position to succour either of the advanced parties that might eventually require assistance.

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

WHEN the confederates arrived before Surat, Mr Guttlethorpe exulted extremely in the consequences of his famous treaty of Swally Roads. Re-quoting his favourite maxim from Ovid, he appealed to every person whether the middle course had not been hit to a nicety, when Aurungzeb sent him guards to protect the Factory and Garden-house. I am afraid, however, he did not find his allies quite so agreeable in the sequel. The fortified town, of which the castle was the citadel, had first to be carried. Morad made his approaches with most unskilful precipitancy. No sooner had he encamped, than his guns opened from behind some bags of sand half a mile distant from the wall. During the night, these batteries were advanced within a hundred paces of the ditch. But the entreaties of several European matrosses in his brother's service, could not get them permission to sink trenches either for protecting the men under arms, to check sallies, or to render the communication safe between their strange parallels. The loss of the rebels was consequently dreadful. The King not deeming this small fort and the treasure worth succouring, under present circumstances, had authorized the governor to capitulate when summoned. But the glaring mismanagement of the besiegers encouraged him to hold out: and their further attempts made him more confident of success. An escalading party was encountered on the rampart, hacked to pieces, and thrown into the ditch. Aurungzeb, when the other's steel failed, tried his gold. By their Commander's desire the defenders took the bribe, but when the trusting Deccanese battalions came, by appointment, to man the bastion so disposed of, they were also knocked on the head. During these disastrous efforts, the guns generally made a hole in the breast-work every day, which was as regularly built up again at night. Ill fortune in the beginning of a campaign would be almost death to their hopes. So messenger after messenger left the camp to hasten the arrival of Meer Khan.



But Morad, utterly impatient of delay, while vowing annihilation to the town and every creature in it, unhappily recollected the origin of him who blew up Baroach. If a *subordinate* in the English Factory could do so much, why, said Akbar the Second, the *chief* must be able to perform this service in a breath. Had the person now put in requisition, not degraded himself by the peaceful avocation of commerce, the dignified work, which he was expected to undertake, would have insured him honourable treatment. But his Majesty, assigning just the same rank to merchants who load the ocean with fleets, and itinerant pedlars, caused the astonished gentleman to be dragged into his presence like a detected thief. Mr Guttlethorpe spoke the current language fluently, in transacting business. Living before the Gilchristian era, however, he knew little of its grammar: and never having occasion to express himself in such good company till now, he made a sad hash of the Emperor's Oordoo, inimitable in English. "Fringy (Frank), what is thy name?" cried Morad.—"My name is Guttlethorpe, great big Highness, but this is breaking the Swally Road bargain, and using Sir Company very bad."—"Peace, huckster! listen! if our commands be well executed, thou shalt have a reward, but otherwise a flogging." The chief looked rueful, awaiting the mandate in silence. The Prince, unable to pronounce the name of his chosen engineer, turned it as usual into something significant in his own tongue. "*Cutwallorab*," that is, "Justice Scarcewater, listen! we order thee to destroy the town just as your man did Baroach." The alarmed Factor most humbly protested his ignorance of the noble art of destruction, but said he would go home and send his great big Highness (meaning Majesty), a most valorous man of war, who could do anything in that way. "No," replied Morad, "you shan't go till he come: we allow of no shirking. Put Justice Scarcewater's foot in the stocks there, and fetch the other fellow quickly!—and orderly, hear! bring also to the presence *Fort Victory* the fiddler, who once came to Ahmedabad." Admiral Webfoot, to whom the party of soldiers sent on this errand took a note from the Chief, understanding that his military talents were in demand, obeyed the call instantly, repeating all the way to himself, "Lord High Admiral of the Mogul Empire." Having just adorned his person in the extremity of fashion, to exhibit to the ladies at dinner, he looked to Christian and Pagan exceedingly like a mountebank. Claiming precedence of Jiger, he stalked pompously foremost, and when announced, to shew how little the sea had spoiled his manners, made two sweeping bows worthy of a Parisian "professor of the dance." "Is that a fighting man?" cried the Prince.—"Yes, yes, a very good one, great big Highness—he fights in water."—"In water? If this be a trick of thine to get away, Justice Scarcewater, thou shalt suffer! But we will soon find out what he is. Who art thou?—what is thy employment, sirrah? Pshaw! he does not even understand Oordoo, *Fort Victory*, ask *him* if he knows how to dance." Thinking this a preliminary en-

quiry respecting his courtly accomplishments, which, he flattered himself, were equal to any landsman's, the Admiral, smirking, answered in the affirmative. "Let us see," rejoined Morad, "and, Fort Victory, play to him on thy fiddle." Jiger, suspecting his musical genius to have obtained him the honour of an imperial message, wisely had brought the instrument with him, and now performed, as the seaman wriggled and capered through a hornpipe. Not a muscle had hitherto moved in any courtier's face. But the character of "a valorous man of war" being in their estimation ludicrously incompatible with dancing, when this exhibition began the Prince gave way to his natural levity, and all those about him laughed vociferously.

Guttlethorpe, feeling rather uncomfortable, when he foresaw the impossibility of insisting further on his friend's warlike pretensions, dispatched an express to the Factory for a military officer. Major (no longer Colonel) Dressup in full uniform, swathed and harnessed, arrived in consequence, just as Webfoot finished the unlucky demonstration of his modish acquirements, with a superb bow. The grim and stiff aspect of this hero sufficiently bespeaking his calling, he was without preface told to take or blow up the town and fort. "I will try, if ordered," replied the Major. "You are a soldier, indeed, *All Beard* (Darree sub) and no dancer! you are *ordered*! Set to work—quick, quick! We will give you five thousand rupees when the place falls: what more?"—"I cannot act without orders from my superior officer."—"Thy superior officer! What, granny's naughtiness, dost thou mean?"—"Colonel Batta."—"Ask we leave of any huckster's slave? Thou shalt obey or be chastised instantly—call the whipper!"—"For God's sake," cried Guttlethorpe with terrified looks, "consider what you are about: my good fellow, promise to do as he bids you, and let us get home to dinner in whole skins."—"I cannot act contrary to the rules and regulations."—"Oh! confound your rules and regulations. Here am I, the representative of the Honourable Company, with one foot in the stocks, and you, a field officer in the service, just going to be flogged, all for the sake of a piece of d——d nonsense only to be thought of on a quiet parade. My dear Dressup, do take the middle course, and promise to obey till further orders; ay that is it, man, till Batta confirms the Prince's orders." The Major, shaking his head, said, "he recollected no precedent for the proceeding recommended. He having no commission in the Mogul army, King Sawney's orders, being necessarily null and void, could not receive confirmation."—"Lord have mercy on us," rejoined the distressed Chief, "look at that horrible corah—just look at it!" Honest Jiger, treated more kindly though certainly not respectfully, had learnt among his brother travellers, in Serais and Topes, to speak in a more polished style than his compeers. With this advantage he now joined his palms, and addressed the Prince on behalf of the mighty victor of Hansgunje, explaining the nature and cause of the Major's hesitation. "He is a most potent warrior,"

concluded he, "capable of doing great things for your Majesty if duly honoured, but he will be useless if once disgraced."—"Well, Fort Victory, we pardon him, but you shall answer for his taking the place. Send for his friend quickly!—and listen! look yonder, put *All Beard* into that leopard's cage, until we catch his master." It being the custom, in India, to press men for all sorts of public labour, the poor people are wont, whenever they can, to run away and hide themselves. Morad applying the same rule to European merchants, would trust none whom he wanted to officiate with the use of their legs. In the true spirit of a martyr, Dressup crept into the wild-beast's vacant mansion; and kneeling down where he could not stand upright, with arms crossed on his breast, he looked towards the throne in the attitude of a condemned warrior, awaiting his doom from a firing party, agreeably to his own venerated code.

The Admiral, having acquitted himself to his own admiration, and ascribed the merriment of the spectators to the faces made by his musician, now expected an audience on naval affairs, and certainly got one. But he was also doomed to feel the disadvantage of an elevated and conspicuous position, so frequently complained of by eminent persons. For, while bounding to the computed elevation of two feet from the floor, he happened to be recognised by a trader whom he had plundered: and this unforgiving man hoping for vengeance, perhaps partial restitution, told his sovereign that the dancer was a pirate, possessed of twenty five laks of rupees taken by him from the faithful subjects of Akbar the Second. This was news worth another fort, and a bird in the hand to boot, towards the carrying on of just and necessary war. "Come here, pirate," cried Morad in his usual frank way: "surrender twenty of thy twenty-five laks immediately to us, or we will have thee strangled, and take the whole: enough!" The admiral not altogether liking the joke, or quite sure whether it were one or not, swore in English that he had not twenty thousand rupees in the country. "Let the hangman attend! but we must first learn where the scoundrel keeps his money." Before Jiger translated this speech of the Prince, Guttlethorpe conjured his friend to give up a lak or two, otherwise all of them, and the Factory itself, would be sacrificed. The bold Admiral, discharging a volley of sea oaths against giving up a farthing, charged the Chief with timidity, and alleged that King Sawney durst not for the soul of him touch a hair of a free-born Englishman's head. "I say, Mr Jiger, tell him to have a care what he does: bid him mind as how I am an English gentleman, and a sea officer too—yes an Admiral, tell Sawney, as much as Blake, that he knows about of course." Jiger, not quite so confident of inspiring terror by the name of his country, humbly petitioned for mercy, but was commanded to hold his tongue. Meanwhile the reckless Webfoot was cracking some filthy jokes on the appearance of an odd looking seat, new to all the Europeans, upon which the Prince desired him to sit down. He conceived in his vanity that the honour of sitting in the presence, must be accorded

in consequence of his asserting his dignity. What now supported him was a frame standing on four feet, resembling a camp stool with a riddle-like seat of brass wire. "Where is thy money, pirate?" demanded the young despot sternly: and a servant at the same time thrust a chafing dish, filled with burning charcoal, under the Admiral's seat of honour. "Good Lord!" roared Guttlethorpe, "they are going to burn you to death, my dear sir, let me offer a lak for you!"—"What does he mean? Is this treatment for an English gentleman? Ho, this is d—d unpleasant!" cried the Admiral, trying to rise whilst two men held him fast. "Great big Highness," proceeded the afflicted Chief, "I will borrow one lak to stop more roasting, Sir Company is too poor; but I pray stop and take one lak!"—"Blow you sons of hogs!" thundered the Prince to his menials, and their inflated cheeks soon made the heat intolerable. Springing into the air with ten-fold greater agility than he danced, Webfoot upset those restraining him, and burst through the crowd like a rocket with his inexpressibles on fire, yet blaspheming like one who despised the penal element. His pursuers found him squatted in a nasty puddle, which extinguished the flame and somewhat allayed his sufferings. As the Admiral "shewed fight" and looked ferocious, they were obliged to net him, and in this plight they brought him back to renew the torture. Jiger and Guttlethorpe implored and promised more money. But their friend, with unsubdued resolution and avarice, nodded sulkily to all proposals, saying nothing. Fortunately Colonel Batta, now arriving, set the imprisoned conscience and person of Major Dressup at liberty. This event giving another bent to the mind of the volatile Prince, he readily took Guttlethorpe's security for two laks of rupees, on account of the hapless mariner. "I'll be d—d ere I pay you—I came here on duty at your request:" cried the Admiral, "so charge the expense of this work to the Company if you please," added he winking, and visibly glad to have overreached the man who saved his life.

The late tenants of the stocks and cage were now released and high in favour. Guttlethorpe received his dismissal with a dress of honour and a lame horse.

The enduring Dressup, quite ignorant of engineering, had luckily recollected an interloper seeking employment who understood the mysteries of sap and mine. Guided by this person, who was now in attendance, he asked and obtained the necessary assistance, including three hundred expert miners, to run a gallery under the ditch to the principal bastion, beneath which an ample chamber was filled with bags of gunpowder. From thence a train, called a *sausage*, extended to a convenient distance outward. The garrison remained unconscious and incredulous of any scientific operations being in contemplation against them. Morad, with the overflowing spirits of a boy about to enjoy some favourite sport, invited all his officers to look out for what he called a piece of fun. This consisted in ordering out scaling ladders, and making a demon-

stration as if it were intended to scale the undermined bastion, which, as foreseen, was instantly filled with defenders. Dressup fired the train. The explosion, shaking the earth, sent forth an irregular and jagged column of rubbish, which darting eddies of dust from its hidden abyss, hurled fragments of masonry and bodies of men high in the air, to fall over the surrounding fields. Before the atmosphere had time to clear, Morad, with bow and arrows, mounted by the breach to the rampart, and began to shower his missiles on the wretched people within. The surviving soldiers evacuating the citadel, made their escape by a sally port on the opposite side. Persons of peaceful callings, who could not leave helpless old or young relatives, and shopkeepers hoping to save their property, ran distracted through the streets imploring mercy, but found none. Wherever a voice rose claiming the justice and clemency of Shah Jehan, it was silenced by the unerring shafts of his son. "Set upon them," said the relentless conqueror to his myrmidons, "and slay at least five thousand, the smallest number that will insure us a good song in praise of our victory."

The breach effected as described by the demolition of the works without report or flame, adding to the Prince's reputation awful respect for his attainment in martial science, caused Dressup to be ever afterwards considered a wizard in great favour with the powers of darkness—a belief which his personal appearance tended to confirm.

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JAMES.—You said an ocean of flame ascended when Baroach was blown up: why was there none in the case of Surat?

BROWNIE.—There being an excess of gunpowder at Baroach, much of it was projected into the air before it ignited, and hence the flame became visible. At Surat there was enough, and no more than enough of gunpowder to do the work of destruction without shewing flame.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SUJA, as yet unmolested in his progress, issuing from the confines of Behar, continued to march along the eastern bank of the Ganges to the neighbourhood of Benares. The imperial army of observation now arrived on the opposite side of the river. The Prince's left, being flanked by the stream at a place *where no one had ever thought of crossing troops, except in*

boats, he considered himself perfectly secure against a surprise, Cambridge, not satisfied with immemorial belief on this important point, made enquiry among the poor people, who gained their daily bread passing and repassing frequently near the spot. He learnt by this means that the Ganges there was often fordable in dry seasons, and then particularly on account of a recent drought of long continuance.

He forded accordingly before daybreak next morning, and was forming the Mogul cavalry in front of the enemy's lines, when Suja first heard of the movement. The first glimmering of the brief twilight, however, disclosed the army of Bengal drawn up in excellent order. Cambridge, acting on his mechanical principle, charged at full gallop. The result very much resembled the dispersive power of a stone thrown among a flock of sparrows. Horse and foot dropped their arms, and ran so fast that few were hurt. But the Sultan, and a party of officers when surrounded, fought desperately, and finally forced their way to a boat, in which he escaped. The Europeans standing by their guns, which the intermixture of the two armies prevented them from using, being quite abandoned, surrendered at discretion. The whole standing camp also remained in possession of the victors: but by far the most precious capture was the Haram of the royal voluptuary. As the sanctity of such establishments is generally, if not always respected by Moslem warriors, no special measures of protection had been resorted to on the present occasion. To the far-famed beauties, now his captives, the conqueror was known as their former physician. The citizens of London and Westminster, at this announcement, are not to figure to themselves a member of the Royal College obeying a mandate from the Horse Guards "to leave the upper lip unshaved till farther orders:" and swaddled in scarlet embroidery, bedizzened with plumage, harnessed in long weapons at haunch and heels, flourishing the baton of command over a sham-fight in the field of Hounslow. Not at all. Medicine, not the privilege of drugging, taking fees, and scrawling unintelligible Latin—but the art of mitigating and removing bodily pain, is a part of liberal education in the East, which most well taught people pretend to know something about. On this and some other detached points, Orientals seem to think more sensibly than Europeans. They have not the same capricious divisions of intellectual labour to exclude men from being useful, or to allot them unsuitable employment. I allude to public sentiment, rather than enacted laws. For example, a rich baker, brewer, or haberdasher, whose calling argues no knowledge beyond it, by the legitimate channels of parliamentary corruption, may become a fit and sufficient legislator in the opinion of the sovereign people. A clergyman is utterly excluded from the House of Commons, and abused if he act as a Justice of the Peace. Physicians and surgeons, who, on an average of both,

have more of general education and intelligence than men of independent fortune, are treated like trespassers in the senate. At least they may expect unsavoury jokes, not indeed for knowing the divine Hygeia, but upon certain familiarities which they are always supposed to have with her homely handmaids. To see a Hakeem, or doctor of any learned profession, change his vocation and appear as a statesman or general, was nothing more wonderful in the Mogul empire, than a barrister holding forth in Parliament, or my lord's chaplain taking his seat in the Upper House. After this digression, unpardonable I allow, amidst such momentous affairs, I shall hasten to state that Cambridge, though received by the ladies as an old acquaintance, was to his regret refused the privilege of the doctor's gown. That is to say, they desired to see him, but would not be seen by him. Their captivity seemed to affect them astonishingly little. Peeari Bana, the beautiful and witty Sultana, rated him in her light manner, for coming back to old friends in this rough style, to kill those whom he was wont to cure. "I presume," said she, "your name as well as nature is altered now," and called him *Cala-boorj*, instead of *Cam-boorj*, or according to their significant corruptions of words, *bastion of destruction*, no longer of *love*,—these being the appellations of two Hindoo deities. This Princess, tolerating habits in her husband which she could not control; by assiduously cultivating mental endowments, maintained an uniform ascendancy amidst so many rivals. Knowing the extent of her influence, and likewise flattering himself that he could work on this lady's mind with more success than on that of her lord, he expatiated with the proofs in his hands, on the dark and selfish duplicity of Aurungzeb. He contrasted this procedure with the noble candour and integrity of Dara, who was affirmed to be already in possession of the empire. The time for a contest, were one ever allowable, had therefore gone by. Why should not Sultan Suja now retire to his own paradise and be happy? Having said so much, he left the Princess's sagacity to add the present victory, which, if followed up as the speaker might, would utterly ruin her husband. Her Highness perceived this delicacy, and indirectly acknowledged it. She next enquired whether he had powers to grant peace, and since there could be no neutrality, to conclude a treaty of alliance between the King and his brother. Cambridge, evading what put the two on terms of equality, offered to incur the responsibility of guaranteeing to the Prince his continuance in the Viceroyalty of Bengal, under the joint Emperors, on the simple condition of defending the province against the enemies of their majesties. With these propositions on paper, the charming Vice-queen posted off to her husband's new position. The victorious General followed soon after almost unattended. His late enemy received him cordially, subscribed the compact, and became the subject of king Dara.

Shah Jehan, by this time much better, had just reached Agra when his son received this joyful intelligence. Cambridge was immediately raised to the commandery of five thousand horse, and in a few days elevated further to the Government of Allahabad. But the same packet which conveyed this honour, contained a letter from Dalbracken, communicating disastrous news from the West, and requiring the new Viceroy's presence at the head of his old legion.

After the sack of Surat, in which they found much less treasure than was expected, the confederate Princes advanced rapidly in two divisions towards the capital cities. Aurungzeb, affecting to consider the centre in a line of march, as in battle, the post of dignity, got leave to lead the way. On reaching the Narbudda, he perceived the large town of Ugyein, on the further side, occupied by the Maharana's troops. They presently moved out to dispute the passage of the river, forming on the intervening plain, with the body of Mogul horse next the ford. But the Chief of the Deccan, being no zealot of military glory for its own sake, having no intention of committing his hopes to the usual chances of war, encamped quietly in sight, and allowed his adversaries to keep their positions undisturbed at that time. Jeswunt Sing, with an imprudence equal to the cunning of the other, and not less characteristic, disdained to attack "the Dervise," whose inferior army was jaded by a long march. "Stay," said he, "till the gallant Morad arrive : he alone is worthy to be encountered by the King of the Rajpoots ; let their forces unite, and then will I defeat two Imperial Princes in one day !" In this spirit of braggardism, he lay many days inactive, allowing Aurungzeb to pursue his favourite mode of disuniting enemies. Distributing moderate bribes and magnificent promises, appealing strongly to the bigotry and nationality of the Moguls, he persuaded them to assist, instead of opposing him in crossing the stream, and to fall upon their Hindoo companions in arms. Delaying, therefore, until the army of Guzerat came sufficiently near to reinforce him in case he were worsted, the wary Prince thought to insure to himself all the personal renown and advantages of a victory without running any risk. Meer Khan, now at the head of his artillery, took post during the night close to the Narbudda, on a spot that commanded the Rajpoot lines. The cavalry of the Deccan forded the river at dawn, covered by a tremendous cannonade, which told on the Hindoos with extraordinary precision. The Moguls received repeated orders to charge, as the enemy emerged in single files from the water ; but so far from obeying, they stood fast, until the rebels approached their front, when the whole turning round, rushed helter skelter among their allies, expecting to throw them into confusion. Not succeeding, however, in producing the expected flight, the treacherous fugitives drew off and stupidly collected in groupes between the Rajpoots and Meer Khan's guns, which consequently ceased



firing. This cessation enabling Jeswunt to rally his men without waiting for the onset of Aurungzeb, he attacked, routed, and chased his cavalry over the field. Ten minutes more would have ended the aspirations, probably the existence, of the cunning aspirant. But unfortunately Morad, hearing the sound of conflict, pushed furiously forward, and at this crisis plunged with the van of his column into the river. From the opposite shore, he burst upon the unconscious victors, scattered in disarray over the plain, in a tempest of steel, which bore down thousands, and annihilated them as an army. Two hundred men remained with Jeswunt in a firm phalanx, from which the Moslems recoiled. At last the Chief, holding up the Apparition's talisman as his pledge of victory, led the devoted band through the centre of his enemies, where the Prince appeared in person. Galloping on to his own baggage, he mounted a carriage, drove it round the triumphant ranks of the rebels; and then joining the remnant of an hundred thousand men, Jeswunt took the road to Chittore, rejoiced as if he had gained the battle. When near home, he sent a message desiring his wife to make the usual preparations for receiving him as a conqueror; but the truth had travelled faster than he. This woman, the daughter of his predecessor, fraught with all the spirit of her house, shut the gates in his face, and returned an indignant answer: "That Jeswunt Sing who sent thee," said she to the messenger, "is a foul impostor. Tell him, that the Chief of the Rajpoots never fled from a field of battle where his people perished. I have no husband! he has doubtless fallen, as became the descendant of Rama; and if so, his widow is prepared in the stole of death to embrace him, and expire in the flames which consume his dead body. Were he living, the halls of our fathers could not open to receive an inglorious fugitive. He who would reign here, must enter crowned with victory!" The Maharana, hitherto satisfied with beating Aurungzeb, and displaying personal bravery, under the miraculous protection of his progenitor's image, had expected to delight the proud Ranee with an account of his vainglorious drive round Morad's army. But when he received this conjugal intimation of his demise, he promptly adopted the only means of restoring himself to what the warlike Princess deemed life.

In a few days, a fresh body of troops was called out, with which he proceeded to the imperial camp to retrieve his honour. Jeswunt found the King making his arrangements to meet the rebels, who, elated with success, were advancing rapidly. On the 5th of June, the hottest season of the year, the whole of their forces took post at Summoughur. They were drawn up in three divisions, and in three lines, of which last the foremost consisted of artillery and cavalry, the second of camels bearing swivels, which the drivers worked, and the infantry formed the rear. Aurungzeb commanded on the right,

and under him Meer Khan, who took the precaution of entrenching his guns, and raising a breastwork to protect his men. The left, called Prince Mahommed's Wing, the child on whose head the oath was taken to support Akbar the Second, had Yacoob ben Leeth for its general.

On the side of Dara, the Ameer-ool-Omerah, Rustam Khan, who ranked next to the Princes, was destined to oppose Aurungzeb, at the head of the King's left wing. Shahista Khan who, after a humble submission, and Shah Jehan's intercession, had been taken again into favour, was appointed to lead the right. The same disposition in regard to horse, camels, and foot, characterised the order of both armies. The two competitors, preceded by stirrup trains, surrounded by the cognizances of empire, appeared in their respective centres, each displaying, on opposite sides of the field, the standard of the Great Mogul, which is a green flag with the meridian sun in gold, fearfully symbolical of the unnatural contest about to ensue. The disclosures which Dalbracken, on reflection, thought himself bound to make, of the wide spread treason at Delhi, rendered his master, ever averse to suspect treachery, unusually circumspect at present. He rejoiced in the leniency of his representative, in doing on his own responsibility what would certainly have been reckoned egregious weakness or downright fear in himself. Yet, ignorant how far disaffection pervaded the rest of his great officers, his Majesty resolved to trust the fate of the day chiefly to his own division. The entire army of Malwa, in consequence, formed part of it. Just as he gave the order to advance on the enemy, the Chief of the Nobles, or Commander-in-Chief, came galloping up abruptly, requesting to remain in reserve with thirty thousand men. "Rustam," said Dara, "my orders are given; here is sufficient reserve around me: I mean to face the rebels in our first rank, expecting my friends to maintain their posts, as I shall mine."

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## CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE fatal battle of Summoughur, of which I am able to convey no adequate impression, consisted of several simultaneous conflicts that can only be described separately.

Both armies at the same instant, as Ferishta correctly says, began to move from wing to wing, narrowing the space between them. Dara, arrayed in all the splendours of his station, rose upright under his canopy in full view. Magnificent attire, even his physical elevation, appeared all to become that royalty of nature in his aspect, which now seemed to animate every

heart, as the eye of their Sovereign glanced from his post of treble danger over the wilderness of weapons raised in defence of his rights. A tempest of missiles presently poured against the conspicuous seat of the King. Balls, rockets, shells, hissed, blazed, and exploded on every side of him. The well pointed cannon of Meer Khan made havoc on his flank; sweeping away whole ranks, the shot lifted many from the ground, dashing their bleeding carcasses under the feet and upon the trappings of the state elephant. This advance in state, conformable to established prejudice, was blameable as a military movement. The Ameer-ool-Omerah was deeply stung by the rejection of his proposal, in terms which seemed to reflect on his courage. Vain of a name derived from the Achilles of Persian story, and illustrated by himself in many a field of carnage, Rustam pushed forward his division with headlong fury upon the opposing wing, which purposely retreated to expose him to the intrenched guns. He then flourished his sword with the pride of a gladiator, as the signal to ride over the parapet and take the batteries. When within a few paces of the embrasures, a shot crushed his head to atoms. The cavalry fled in dismay before the redoubling thunders of Meer Khan. Aurungzeb instantly ordered out his horse to attack the second line of camels, and complete the overthrow of the imperial left wing. "Dalbracken," cried Dara, "we are betrayed on the right, and defeated on the left; Shakhista, instead of charging Mahommed, has left the field with his whole force. Let General de Sylva halt, and open his guns on Prince Morad's columns." The command was punctually obeyed. The engines of death being turned round, the line of burning matches descended on their touch-holes, and all went off like the long pealing of a vast thunder cloud. The torrent of balls, striking the ground in front of the first line, bounded among the moving ranks, and created sufficient confusion to arrest the Prince's progress some minutes, just as he was preparing to give the shock to his opponents. "General Cambridge, take Rustam's place, and save that division. Another of your officers," continued the King to Dalbracken, "must meet the enemy's left, which I perceive is about to fall upon our flank, now exposed by the treason of my villanous uncle." "Steelbow," cried his friend, "draw out your own legion and attack Yacoub ben Leeth in your own way!" No order could be better suited to the man, or more eagerly obeyed. Cambridge having got ready by this time, moved off first. The rebels had dispersed the camelmen, and at this moment borne down the infantry. De Jungle's flag disappeared, and dense squadrons were hurrying over the spot where he lately stood. The commander of the Podalirians, striking the spurs into his own charger, and making the petty officers shout vociferously, rushed at the pursuing enemy, who, scattered, wheeled about and fled like sheep before an opening pack of hounds. The intrench-

ments saved them from being cut to pieces. The impetuous spirit of Cambridge, provoked by this disappointment, brought up his guns, which very soon breached the parapet. He then alighted to lead his infantry to the storm. Indian soldiers seldom shine in this trying service. But peculiar attention to them in sickness, and indulgence to their foibles in health, had so endeared this officer to his men, that they now followed with an ardour which the frigid sense of "duty" never inspires. The fantastical banner, associated with so many days of past triumph, was watched by all eyes, as they advanced in the face of a murderous fire. At every accidental stoppage, those behind cried out, "Forward! forward! on with the clouded moon!" Their General presently mounted the breach, and perceived that a wall of sand-bags effectually cut it off from the rest of the works. He was proceeding to assault this unexpected defence, when the person called Meer Khan, crying to him to desist, and seeing the injunction vain, directed a volley of matchlocks on the van of the assailants, which destroyed nearly the whole. Their leader lay amongst the dead! The lifeless body borne off with his flag waving over it, was a rallying point to the discomfited troops as they fell back. The cavalry of the fallen General required in the centre, being withdrawn, those of the enemy emerged again from behind the works, to overpower the retreating storming party. Bethel, however, joining them opportunely at the head of his own infantry, formed the whole into a circle, four files deep, in a ploughed field. Three ranks presented spears, resting the butt-ends on the ground, and making the points project forward in successive tiers, one above another, while the men knelt to let those with matchlocks in the remaining row fire over their heads. Aurungzeb pushed on his heavy masses to annihilate this despised class of soldiers. The horse, quite unprepared to meet resistance, approached eagerly, sinking to the fetlock joints in the soil, which recent irrigation had rendered soft. But seeing the bristling wall immovable, whilst many were dropping, they wheeled to the left in utter confusion, and in seeking to escape, exposed their whole flank to the deliberate aim of the marksmen. These darting their bullets from the enclosed space, effectually fortified the approaches to their living fortress by a ghastly rampart of dead enemies.

By this time Steelbow had acted his part. His trumpets sounded—the men faced to the right, and hailed the unfurling of the Torn Beaver with a loud yell of joy. The athletic form and sweeping sabre of their commander inspired wonted confidence, as he shone before them in his dazzling garb and Grecian helmet, whose red horse-hair streamed like a meteor. "*Loot Pat! Loot Pat!*" roared Steelbow, "*Plunder! plunder!*" pointing to a long string of carts which success would give them. Then making his charger prance until the eyes of all were fixed on him, he moved off at a canter, and all followed, bellowing the war-cry

which he had given. Leeth had received orders, and was preparing to attack, but stood still after his fashion, to consider how he should meet an enemy in motion. The wind was high, and the intervening plain covered with dust. Steelbow's cavalry filling the air with blinding clouds, struck terror into their opponents, who not seeing or knowing where the onset was to take place, stood fast until hundreds were knocked from their saddles without lifting a hand to defend themselves. Presently the entire left wing of the rebels broke and fled for safety. Not one man remained to protect the string of carts which it was found contained Morad's wardrobe of state dresses used for investing officers with dignities, and a good deal of treasure. The only resistance the Pileans encountered was from Meer Khan's battery, which they were exposed to, though at a distance. Steelbow, amidst the tumult, now became conspicuous, when the men round the stirrup, mounted on elephants, uttered a low melancholy shriek. "Alas!" said the King "that rocket struck him and has passed on,—he is no more." But this was no time for any one to think of another's fate. The cannon of the centre not having silenced those opposed to them, Dara advanced into the very jaws of his enemy's battery, when the rebel brothers both came on in person at the same time. "Azim Khan," said his Majesty, "I believe the elephant is still unhurt, run straight upon Prince Morad's guns, and make him break the chain that connects them." Terrible as this undertaking seemed, the order was instantly obeyed. The stupendous animal grasping the iron chain in his proboscis, shook it with such violence that the links gave way, and he passed behind the cannon, followed by a body of troops who captured the whole. Here one of the thousand rockets, aimed at Dara, lighted on the roof of his castle, and the grenade forming its peak, which the Indians call a pomgranate, burst, and shattered his canopy to pieces. Before accomplishing the daring achievement just related, the King made arrangements for meeting the impending attacks of the two Princes. "Jeswunt Sing," cried he, "there is Aurungzeb, be avenged! Dalbracken, it is your part to pull that sun from the firmament of rebellion!" The Deccanese troops came on rather slowly over some broken ground, after leaving the intrenchments, and the caution of their leader would not allow the front to engage until the rear also should reach the level plain. In this predicament the stirring cry of "Deen, Deen, Mahommed!" was raised in vain to make them stand. The Rajpoots, burning with vengeance, put their horses to full speed, howling "Ram, Ram, Mahadew!" until they broke the Moslems, and transfixed thousands with their lances. For some hundred paces further the furious waves of red turbans kept lashing the wrecks that rolled before them. But at last they became exposed to the enemy's guns, and desisted from pursuit. The Deccanese horse, no longer confiding in their fortifica-

tions, began deliberately to pack up their light moveables, and continued flying. Aurungzeb, who in the worst emergencies, never lost his presence of mind on the field, tried all his address to stay this panic. Knowing likewise that there was no safety for himself elsewhere, he determined to trust implicitly to chance, or what he called Providence, where there really appeared no hope. "God is with me here," said he, "and your native Deccan is far away. Let us keep together and prosper yet! Even now, I behold angels descending to succour the believing host. Fiends traverse these plains, delivering the fugitives to death and hell fire. Those who shall yet stand fast and fight bravely, are promised victory and salvation!" To manifest his own confidence in this prediction and impious cant, the Prince, speaking in a loud voice, commanded the chains to be fastened to his elephant's legs, in the usual way, to prevent it from moving. Yet scarcely five hundred men remained with him and Meer Khan.

Dalbracken had not the good fortune to find an adversary whom caution rendered sluggish. As on poor Cambridge's principle, the characteristic impetuosity of Morad would have given a momentum to his column irresistible by a quiescent body, Dalbracken desired to make the cavalry of Malwa attack first, or at least meet him mid-way, giving and receiving the shock at once. The dense order of the Pretorian horse, officered by Europeans, he thought would repulse the Moguls. Most fortunately for him, his men took a different course. Seeing the Prince start his invincibles, leading the way with the imperial standard on his elephant, which was put to full speed, the Pretorians, unbidden, moved round a field of tamarisk lying on their left and the Prince's right, too dense for horse to ride through. The rebels believing that Dara's van, like most who dared to face them, had taken to flight, went onward at the gallop to fall on himself. The fire of the stirrup train, or party close to the King's person, checked the foremost, and those behind had to rein up. No sooner did the Pretorians, on making a circuit of the tamarisk, see the backs of their formidable enemies, than they dashed among them in good order, and in a few minutes swept the unconquerable band from the field. The few hundreds before continued to skirmish with the King's troops, a party of which under the Rajpoot Mann Sing tried to capture Morad; but succeeded only in cutting the pillars supporting the roof of his hoodah or castle, which giving way with a crash, the canopy came to the ground. The Prince now appeared, fierce as ever, with an infant on his knee, discharging arrows that seemed to radiate in continuous streams from a semi-circle about him. The remnant of his men, slaying Mann Sing, drove back the party who were so near seizing the pretender. This unyielding personage now turning round to revenge the dispersion of his host, ordered the elephant to be driven amidst the legion-

aries.—“Surround and seize the Prince!” cried Dalbracken. This was easier said than done. Not one offered to fire at a descendant of Timur, though he kept dealing death on all sides with his own hand.—“Where is Darr Beg Khan?” demanded he.—“Here, Prince, to receive your submission,” was the imprudent answer. Morad rejoined with a scowl and a twang of his bow. Dalbracken, who carried a pistol in his hand, raised it instinctively to his head, and the arrow, expending its force chiefly on the barrel, glanced downward till the point buried itself under his collar bone. This extinguished respect for persons. The wounded party first took aim at his antagonist's body; but seeing the infant move, he elevated the muzzle and fired. The pistol ball went through the Prince's right shoulder, and the deadly instrument fell from his grasp. What could the furious young man do now?—“Forward,” cried he to the driver, “make Azrael trample the scoundrel to death!”—At these words the elephant, goaded on, lifted its proboscis right upwards, and levelling its tusks, ran towards Dalbracken, whose horse reared, and with his rider must soon have been deprived of life. At this moment a man threw himself from his saddle, and rushing between them, divided the elephant's trunk with a vigorous stroke of his sword. It was David Kirkland. The giant brute, in agonizing pain, wheeled round, screaming terribly, and bore away its master in the track of the fugitives. The rapid whirl with which the animal turned made the standard spin out of the bearer's hands, and fall to the earth, whence the humble Scotsman now raised it amidst the tumultuous applause of many thousand spectators. The battle was won, and the victory crowned by an act which appeared its emblem.

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## CHAPTER XL.

Nothing could be more appalling to a rational beholder than the mortal devastation, the offals of human glory, which rose to the view on all sides. A stately forest and a fruitful region laid waste by the tropical hurricane, were a faint but unimpressive representation of the wrecks of recent life and enjoyment that now strewed this memorable field. The charge of the Malwa cavalry led by Europeans, was distinguishable wherever they fought, by banks of the weltering dead. Others surrounded by overpowering numbers of Moguls or Rajpoots, lay in mangled heaps where they had perished. Thousands whom cannon-shot destroyed, lay blended with the remains of cattle subjected to the same fate. The whole plain to the horizon, *beyond this scene of havoc*, exhibited men flying, falling from

their horses in consequence of mortal wounds, or expiring quietly on the ground amidst groupes of friends who dared to linger by them to the last. Such sights, however, must suggest no reflection to the warrior.

Meanwhile the King, having sent a message to the rebel Princes to surrender to their father, summoned his chiefs to the stirrup, as the royal presence is called at the head of an army. To the delight of all, Steelbow appeared in his place singed and blood-stained, though miraculously little hurt. His men groaned under loads of the promised booty. Several chests containing the splendid wardrobe, which they could not conveniently appropriate, were presented by their Commander to his Majesty. When most of the great men had arrived,—“Here!” said Dara, “with this dress let the Nabob Darr Beg Khan, preserver of Kings, be invested as Ameer-ool-Omerah, in the room of Roostum Khan.”—“Fowlad Khan, Steelbow, whom we create a noble of five thousand horse, put on the other.”—“Where is the hero who has this day taught us that the best cavalry may be repulsed by infantry? not arrived—prepare a similar dress for General Bethel.”—“Davood Sahib Bahadur (Kirkland), accept this diamond necklace taken from our own person, and worth an hundred thousand rupees, for the standard borne by Prince Morad.” Many others received like rewards, agreeably to the estimate of their merits. The *Chatta*, a large umbrella as the emblem of royalty, was raised over the head of Jeswunt Sing, and he proclaimed “Shah-Rana, King of the Hindoos.”

Dalbracken now stood on the dazzling eminence to which he was thus elevated, the first of a thousand martial nobles. He immediately became the centre of a proud circle, consisting of all those on the spot, who advanced and presented the hilts of their swords to him, in acknowledgment of his new dignity and authority over them. These were exulting moments. The wild storm of contention had ceased, and given way to sounds of triumph. Friends embraced anew, who lately parted doubtful of ever meeting again. Warriors gathered round, wearing guerdons won at the hazard of life. All indulged in loftiest anticipations from the august and beneficent reign of him to whom they had confirmed an empire. The eyes of the Europeans long wandered over the multitude in vain for Bethel. At length he arrived, not flushed with the consciousness of successful bravery to enjoy its reward, but drooping and feral in his looks. “Dalbracken,” said he, resigning the bridle and extending both hands, “Cambridge lies buried yonder beneath his own flag, and—I shall not long survive him.”—He swerved from the saddle into the arms of his friend, and died.

The impression of many endearing incidents in their extraordinary career, now rose on the survivor's memory with benumbing force. Of all the party, Bethel in particular had that purified taste and contempt of sensuality which made him the chosen associate of Dalbracken's mental being. He hung over



the body and wept. The pinnacle of grandeur on which he had just been placed, sunk under this weight of affliction to the very dust that claimed his beloved companion. The coarser grief of Steelbow found words in homely English, and what the natural death of his nearest relatives would not excite in the least, broke forth as a tribute to the worth of two amiable young men who had been his brethren in arms. They were both of them noble hearted fellows, said he, clever and as brave as man could wish. He there, who has just closed his eyes, led as good a life as if he had been always a parson. If ever I see old England again, so help me God! they shall not want for a fine monument.—Cheer up my good Ameer-ool-Omerah, you have a little more to do yet. That round-head Prince, after amusing our messenger, has sent him back without any answer, referring his Majesty, forsooth, to Akbar the Second. The two brothers have got together, I see, and the runaways are gathering about them again. There, too, faith they are lighting matches in the battery—and hillo! what's ado here? I believe King Dara means to charge them on horseback himself.—Looking forward, Dalbracken saw the state elephant kneeling, and his Prince actually preparing to descend. "Stay, sir," cried he, earnestly, "for your own sake, for the welfare of India, leave not that seat—it is the throne of the Moguls!"—"Chief of nobles," replied the King, "I owe you too much already. It behoves Dara to win and wield the truncheon of Timur with his own right hand. I thank Aurungzeb for yet affording me an opportunity which I had nearly lost. My rebel brothers have still a thousand men, and with a thousand I will now encounter them hand to hand!" This colloquy was stopped by an accident full of horror. Meer Khan having pointed his guns at the King, fired several at once. A shot striking the head of Azim Khan, bespattered Dara with the brains of his foster brother. Without uttering a word, the ill-fated King descended the ladder, and sprang into Bethel's vacant saddle. As no intimation had been given to the army, those only who were within hearing knew of his Majesty's intention to proceed to the front of the cavalry and lead a party to the charge. He consequently soon arrived, where his person was neither known nor expected. Meanwhile one of the omedwars, or young courtiers, having taken charge of the state elephant, instead of following his master, turned to the rear and hastened with the imperial standard out of the line of fire. The rest of the attendants bearing the other cognizances of royal dignity, believing this movement ordered, were presently seen in full retreat also by the whole army. All drew the same instantaneous inference. "King Dara is killed!" The annihilating words passed from rank to rank. Uproar, confusion, and panic succeeded with awful rapidity. Scarcely a sword there was drawn by patriotism. Most of the nobles fought by order of Shah Jehan for his eldest son. They and

his personal adherents thinking him no more, tried to provide for their own safety, never for a moment identifying it with the public cause, which dictated the easily performed duty of seizing the rebellious Princes and dispersing their remaining troops. Some fled to their homes, others to the capital, and not a few crossed over to the enemy.

Aurangzeb, who perceived the truth, immediately sent people in all directions to assert the fulfilment of his prediction, announce the death of his adversary, and reclaim the fugitives. He began to advance, and the stream of flight flowed backwards. Every forward step recalled multitudes to his standard, which presently shone victorious on an empty field. The unhappy Dara, in the terrible reverse, like a ship amidst the breakers in equal danger from the receding tide and the lowering tempest, borne to a distance in the rout of his deluded soldiers, was discovered by Dalbracken and a few of his cavalry, when all besides had abandoned him. The defeated yet successful rebels being in no condition to pursue, he continued his melancholy retreat towards Delhi by Biana.

Over this sanguinary battle, which transferred the sceptre of a mighty empire from the hand of worth and wisdom to that of depraved mediocrity, let the rulers of civilized nations pause. Let gifted men whom the shouts of a mindless rabble incite to become servile homicides, deliberate on the slippery chances in the ghastly lottery of war, which they are made the responsible instruments of purchasing with the blood and treasure of human beings capable of devoting them to better and nobler ends. In my account of the disastrous day of Summonghur, I do not differ more widely from other historians than they among themselves. One important fact, at least, is attested by all. Dara's measures during the action were attended with unequivocal success, which is at once the sole test and entire substance of military merit. He was therefore indisputably entitled to the praise of an able general. But when superiority as a commander, had won him a throne which he might have thenceforth enjoyed without another struggle, his heroic spirit disdained to take it, while detraction itself could find room to insinuate that he owed victory to his officers, or shrunk from those personal encounters in which his brother Morad and the great Akbar, among his ancestors, earned renown as combatants. It is easy for speculative writers, apprised of the result, to trace it gravely to the King's "imprudence and folly" in acting a part renounced by all European Cæsars since the cashiering of chivalry. Dara's innate pride, however, dictated the conduct calculated to raise him highest in the estimation of his people. He desired, not only to possess the first station as the heritage of Timur, but to deserve it as the wisest, bravest, and best man in the empire. I am likewise of opinion, that the last, when undertaken, was not more likely to fail than any of his previous efforts. He had

blow divide the loins and backbone of a sheep, was recognised by the imperial veteran as an inchoate hero, that would by-and-by cut live men in two with equal facility. The most disgusting frequenters of eastern courts, *gluttons*, were also here. The quantity of food which one of these fellows will swallow is beyond belief, be it cooked, raw, dead, or living. On being told, for instance, to make his dinner of a large goat, he catches it alive, eats his way from behind through the bowels, until his head protrudes under the neck in front. The beastly cannibal then, supposed to have gorged the entrails, jumps about on all fours, with his trunk cased in the carcass of his victim. Such sights are perhaps as rare now as bear baiting in Britain, but they continue still among the amusements of Indian princes. The absurdities of buffoons, and the wriggling of dancing women, killed time more privately. His Majesty's more rational entertainment was in seeing his studs of beautiful horses and elephants mustered every day. The elephants, as they passed in review, were taught to kneel before the presence, lift up their flexible trunks to the forehead, and shrill in their peculiar way, to imitate a salam or obeisance.

It was a pleasing reflection to consider a truly great monarch thus enjoying in his dotage the quiet which he had imposed on a distracted empire during his vigorous manhood. But the spectacle filled every mind with anxiety, when his feeble existence and nominal authority were manifestly all that remained to postpone the horrors of a desperate civil war.

Jehanara, eagerly embracing Dalbracken's suggestion, had, without mentioning its origin, sounded her father slightly on the policy of conferring a higher title on his eldest son. To the great regret of the proposer, the Emperor demanded his opinion of the measure at a public levee. The heir-apparent's friends, however, regarded his speedy elevation as certain, and orders were given to prepare for the august ceremony at court.

Gazi-o-Deen, after an unexplained delay, brought the Hadji's reply. The mysterious pilgrim, astrologer, and what not, respectfully declined receiving the visit of a gentleman whose piety was yet not known to fame, but promised his prayers, and—kept the money. The last circumstance gave good hopes of his services being gained, or at any rate neutralized. The supposition derived some confirmation from various reports of the holy man's subsequently praising Dara's noble qualities, and bewailing his errors. Things, on the whole, looked favourably. Nothing was wanting to make Dalbracken amply satisfied with his political procedure, but that meeting, without the intervention of a third person, which he had solicited with the great directress in terms of delicate ambiguity, yet quite intelligible.

One evening, towards the usual hour of retirement, after the inhabitants from their balconies and house tops had gone to the interior, a female messenger was announced in the haram, who desired to speak to Dalbracken. "The Princess," whispered she,

"commands your immediate attendance : please to order your lady's equipage, and follow me." In fond and ambitious anticipation of a moment so long and so ardently desired, he shut himself up in Mariam's palanquin, and the bearers being called into the square from without, lifted it up and trotted along with what they took for their mistress. His conductress, after satisfying a number of inquisitive challengers who stopped them several times, finally reached a place similar to that which they had left, enclosed by walls around and open above. The men retreated, the door closed behind them, and then the beldam, parting the shutters, uncaged her charge. The spot was deserted and silent. "We are safe now," said she, "let us ascend the staircase." He followed accordingly through a passage, little larger than a chimney, with as many turnings and windings as a screw describes in entering a cork. When dizzy and breathless, he beheld the stars twinkling above him, and stumbled forward on a level terrace. At the further end of it appeared a Bala Khana, or *High Chamber*, in which bright lamps were burning, and a lady sitting in stately privacy. The guide introduced him and disappeared instantly, closing the door as she departed. The Princess took no notice of his salutation outside. He boldly entered unbidden, and repeated it in the presence. Alas ! how unlike was the object before him to the picture which his heated imagination had been worshipping so long ! He now saw a woman, by no means ugly, but evidently cursed with a deforming taste. She thrust her hands into full view, displaying rings of pearls and diamonds on all her fingers, while the palms and nails shone dark red with the dye called *Hinna*. The upper semicircle of her ears, loaded at every point, was weighed down, till it doubled over the orifice, by a profusion of cumbersome ornaments. Her forehead, and braided locks of indifferently combed hair, flamed in costly masses of precious stones and metals. What gave a more decided character to the Imperial lady's appearance, and made her look in the sequel like a cannibal at dinner, her Highness was chewing *pawn*. Affecting displeasure and surprise, she lolled, not very decorously, on the gaudy pillows, crying "Ha ! a man in this place ! who art thou who dare to set thy feet in our private apartment ?"—"The suppliant, Darr Beg Khan, the servant of Prince Dara the Magnificent, bends in the presence by command."—"Darr Beg Khan," replied she, assuming a becoming attitude, "we permit you to sit ; be seated here—know that you are welcome !" Having accommodated him in this manner, she proceeded to business. "We respect you even now, and will love you, if that upholder of a madman will become wise. Wherefore, my friend, should you continue the servant of 'Dara the Magnificent ?' Is it not known that the most learned of astrologers, the Reverend Haji, has read his downfall in the stars, which are the book of heaven ? The great have forsaken him on earth, and the infatuated Prince has you alone, not another, to perpetrate his wicked design of shedding the blood of thousands in vain, to make him what God declares he never shall

a fair and reasonable chance of returning crowned with triumph to his great officers, in perfect fellowship, to claim the recognition of their inmost feelings, when he resumed the sovereignty amongst them. No arrangement or proceeding of the rebels materially influenced the fate of their opponent or of the battle. The science and sagacity of one man, Meer Khan, certainly prevented their total overthrow at the commencement, and afforded a rallying point at the close of the day. But the ball that transmuted victory into defeat, and made the vanquished rebel a triumphant emperor, was not aimed by him at the object which it struck. Had Azim Khan not been killed by the shot pointed at his master, he would have followed to the charge with all the Imperial ensigns, drawing the eyes of an anxious army, not to the empty seat as he retired from danger, but to their sovereign in person, scattering the remnant of a beaten enemy.

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## CHAPTER XLI.

MORAD, agreeably to his custom, encamped, dined, and slept on the field of battle. The most complete triumph of an Indian heart stung by vengeance, is to eat upon an enemy's grave; but in him the practice was mere boasting. His recovered soldiers were very noisy in congratulating their "Emperor." Aurungzeb, carrying his submissive humility to the greatest excess, after reconciling his brother to Meer Khan, who received many a hug of renewed affection for his day's service, appeared at the head of the chiefs of both armies to compliment his Majesty on the glorious victory which he had gained, and thereby established his throne. The common men, likewise, were indirectly told to surround the tent and bellow their grosser flattery, professing joy at the same event. This conduct of the wily Prince deceived many besides Akbar the Second, but the motive of it will shortly transpire. His Majesty's wound being only in the fleshy part of his arm, he was soon able to move to Agra, where the whole rebel force now arrived. Shah Jehan, though resolved to defend the place, agreed to open a negotiation with his sons. The Princess Jehanara, when duly commissioned, sent to know when she should wait on Aurungzeb, who replied that "His Majesty Akbar Sani was ready to receive his sister as the Ambassadors." The elder brother, thus foregoing his right of precedence, compelled her in some degree to acknowledge the young man's usurped dignity. The external preparations for her reception were sufficiently formal and decorous. She found Morad as requested, alone in his magnificent tent, sitting with his feet

under him, clasping his hands and essaying industriously to seem in meditative abstraction. This attitude being thought particularly dignified and kingly, the Prince assumed it to convince her that he possessed every attribute of royalty. The lady, inwardly much diverted, stepped slowly into the sublime presence, performed the *Tusleem* or act of obeisance with infinite solemnity, and happily recalled the Monarch's attention to things present. "Ah, the Lady Jehanara! What would she with us?" said he pompously. She replied in a grave tone, which beyond even her expectation, concealed the irony from one by no means quick-sighted to anything ridiculous in his regal character. "Come I not to congratulate my new sovereign on his accession to the empire of the Moguls?"—"Well," cried he, imperceptibly throwing off the stiff pomposity, "we never disliked *you*, sister; only it was wrong, very undutiful in you, to assist our enemy so long; but he is beaten now, and we pardon you,—you are pardoned!"—"I kiss your Majesty's shoe, but do forgive the poor old King of kings too! he is equally sensible of our obligations to your omnipotence."—"Yes, we will, Jehanara; he and you shall both be happy! Let our father live here on a million of rupees a month, and you, our beloved sister, shall receive an hundred thousand besides, all to yourself."—"Magnificent Lord of the seven climates, how shall this handmaid thank thee?"—"We will give you likewise all those villas on the Jumna, with permission to have plenty of monkeys, parrots, and pictures for amusement."—"O! boundless and ever-flowing ocean of generosity!"—"We will allow you to take a husband too, Jehanara,—choose any of those young men that visit you, except the accursed son of a huckster who shot us in the shoulder."—"Most magnanimous and beneficent Emperor, when will thy goodness exhaust itself?"—"Never towards you, Jehanara! We will shew our liberality this very day. When you return to the fort, order out those two millions of our treasure in the old Emperor's coffers, we want them to pay our troops, and will bestow two laks upon you immediately."

"Now, Morad," said the Princess, assuming her proper place and deportment as she sat down: "Now Morad, I have trifled with you long enough, just listen to a little truth and reason, which I come to speak in the name of your father and Sovereign."—"Have not we promised to treat him with the greatest generosity?"—"What more?"—"Pray, brother, do not interrupt me! You were once, indeed, a generous boy, whose heart could not be easy until you had repaid a present of a pearl with a diamond. Do try, for one moment, to think and consider what you owe to Shah Jehan. The government of provinces, the vast wealth of which obtained you every pleasure in peace, and armies to earn the highest fame in war: a proud lineage, even the graces of your person, are all derived from an over-indulgent parent. How has Morad requited inestimable favours, of

which he is fully sensible ; yes, vain, even to folly, of the least of them ? Why like a young tiger, that rends the fosterer who has afforded the nurture which yields it strength to destroy him !—Morad, Morad ! such ingratitude will incur infamy among men, and reprobation hereafter. Have you not been devastating the country of your birth ? Are not the weapons of these ruffians red with the blood of your father's people ? Ah me ! you appear to my mind, at this moment, as a butcher from the shambles where men are the victims, flourishing your reeking knife in the presence of an insulted parent, and a parricide preparing to tread the grey hairs of majesty in the dust ! Oh ! return to your duty as a son and a subject, and be again, my brother, what you have been !”

Akbar the Second, like many young men, wise in their own conceit, entertained great aversion to opinions in discordance with his own ; and fearing lest the general purport of this grave admonition should prove unanswerable, he kept responding and protesting against every sentence as his sister spoke, despite of her entreaties for a patient hearing. But when she came to the disparaging portraiture of his victories, he seemed petrified, staring with mute astonishment. Ridicule or contempt of war and warriors sounded in the Prince's ears like blasphemy to a minister of religion. Forgetting all that preceded, and deaf to what followed, recurrence to this topic was the first use he made of his returning faculty of speech. “Shambles !—Ruffians !—A butcher !—Prophet of God ; none but cowards ever called glorious battles and heroes by such vile names ! Our deeds of fame have been done in the eyes of the universe, and will descend to the latest posterity. A butcher in the shambles ! though a woman, one descended from the Great Timur, ought to know better than use such language.” The youth having thus vented his rage, grew calm again, and Jehanara, taking care not to ruffle him farther, reverted to the object of her mission. “What would you ask of us now ?” said he, “we have already promised as much as our revenues can afford to the old Emperor ; and in regard to our own sins, we will build plenty of Mosques, and be very devout hereafter, when we have leisure. What more ?” Perceiving the vanity of appealing to the feelings of a boy whose nature had become entirely corrupt and callous, through the uncontrolled exercise of power, before the development of his reasoning faculties, she next tried to move him by a clear exposition of the perilous predicament in which he really stood. “How can such a man, who wants a throne himself, ever intend bestowing it upon you. Yet without him, say, is it possible for you to be Emperor of the Moguls ? Morad, take my advice ; submit immediately to your father, and all will yet be well.”—“Submit !” roared he, “we submit, and to whom ?—to your ladyship to be sure ! Shah Jehan is an old dotard, unfit to rule ; but we perceive, madam, you would be another

Noor Jehan ! Ha ! ha ! We knew this before : We are not to be hoodwinked by women !"—"The King of kings," rejoined Jehanara, "has an assessor of his throne, whom God and nature, as well as primogeniture, placed above his brothers ; equal obedience is due to him."—"Who ? Dara, that heretic and tyrant, darest thou think of him in our presence, and praise him too, a king of merchants and peasants ! When caught, which he will be in a few days, we will make him Catwal (or Mayor) of Gualior. The fellow may do for a magistrate !"—"Heretic ! Alas, my poor brother, I know whence you learnt that epithet. Believe me, Morad, if that hypocrite who, for his selfish and most wicked purposes, has misled you, were able to end Dara's career this day, the grave or the dungeon would receive you to-morrow !"—"Again ! what is it we hear ? Is not Dara conquered and deposed by us ? Are not we Emperor of Hindostan ? Are we not Emperor now ?"—"For your own sake, and the sake of the empire, Morad, I answer, God forbid !"—"This insolence is not to be borne, woman—begone from the presence !"—"Unhappy boy ! there is no need of poppy-water to make that head of thine harmless."—"Dost thou dare to utter treason before our eyes ? Return, we command thee, to the citadel, which shall be the future prison of the old man and his loose daughter. Who attends there ? remove the Princess !"—"How brainless and intemperate ! yet, forbid your menials to lay hands on me, I intreat, for I should be sorry to see my attendants commit, not treason, but what your Majesty would call heroism, on the poor men's persons."

Jehanara thus left her insolent and infatuated brother without a hope of saving an aged father from humiliation and robbery. As she proceeded through the camp in her palanquin, with a heavy heart, the bearers were stopped by one in the garb of a dervise, who approached the door very respectfully, and began to speak without presuming to open it—"Has long absence made me quite forgotten, and my person even unknown to a beloved sister ? It is cruel in the Lady Jehanara to think Aurungzeb unworthy of being enquired after, even by a messenger ; for I perceive her Highness does not mean to honour me with a visit." This address, so different from the supercilious conversation of Morad, inclined the Princess to comply with the humble petitioner's wishes. This vigilant gentleman, as will readily be supposed, had taken effectual measures for learning all that passed in the other tent, and was therefore prepared to turn his information to account with the unconscious lady. Receiving his sister in the most becoming and complimentary manner, he embraced her affectionately as soon as they found themselves alone. Nothing could appear more amiable than his conduct, contrasted with Morad's. From the very first she began to suspect a misunderstanding between the confederates. Gazing over her with the delight which a near relation is allowed to



manifest in contemplating a beautiful young woman, he made various remarks that seemed to shew how much his character, as a tasteless, austere being, had been misrepresented.—“How can a creature be so lovely, yet so wise and so innocent; whilst I, born the disfavoured of Heaven, am loaded with involuntary crimes?” Here he covered his eyes and sobbed. But having excited no sympathy for his grief, nor even an enquiry about the cause of it, he resumed.—“Ah! Jehanara, you would pity me could thine eyes of light penetrate this tortured bosom, and see how guilt stings it, when I behold in thy face the living features of our sainted mother. The recollection of her divine lineaments brings to mind the peaceful, happy, oh! and the innocent days of our childhood, ere I forfeited the blessing of a father and king.” He, on uttering these words with a faltering voice, shook under mental agitation, and wept bitterly, to the astonishment of the Princess, who expected to find him nothing but a rebellious ascetic.—“Aurungzeb!” said she solemnly, “what would I give to be certain that your grief is sincere? You know too well who has brought upon our family the reverse of peace and happiness.”—“It is sadly true,” replied he, wiping his eyes, “I am a base and ungrateful criminal, who must despair of forgiveness from the King of kings.”—“Could I believe in your contrition, there yet were hope that the house of our fathers might prosper, and the sun of Shah Jehan set unclouded.”—“Jehanara! crimes have made me fearful of the virtuous; but thy nature is soft and relenting as hers that bore us. Wilt thou listen whilst I tell how I have been seduced?”—“Ha!” rejoined she, “do not pretend to have been led away by the insane folly and childish openness of Morad; yet I will hear you, since penitence is the theme.”—“Nay, my lovely sister, seeing only his folly in civil affairs, I distrusted the boy as much as you, and believed not a syllable of the slander which his emissaries wrote to him from court concerning one who is truly the ornament of the world. It was all falsehood, Jehanara. Yet shall I tell you what was written?”—“No; save time on that head. His mock Majesty has favoured me with a sample already.”—“But when he received constant accounts of Dara’s oppression of the nobles, contempt of religion, and ill-treatment of its ministers: when these were corroborated by my own correspondents, and proved to my simple mind, beyond doubt, when the friends of Shah Jehan, wise in council and brave in battle, along with many holy men, sought refuge in the Deccan from the exterminating enmity of the heir-apparent, could I believe such a man worthy to reign?”—“Such concurrence of circumstances authorized you,” said she, “to think the heir-apparent less tolerant of bad characters than were politic. One of your good sense, however, could not receive an absconling traitor’s statement of his own case as conclusive evidence.” The Prince, though not a

bright speaker, had now formed a lodgment, to use military language, in the feelings of his sister, whence he found himself beginning to command the outworks of her understanding. The last reply contained a slender admission of his having grounds to suspect his elder brother of misgovernment. He proceeded in the same cautious manner to other topics, covering an insidious mass of assumption with a thin veil of undoubted truth, until he got her fairly to allow that she herself might have been deceived by such strong and fallacious testimony. Great stress was laid by him on his devotion to sacred literature, and consequent ignorance of the ways of men, which absorption in study precluded him from learning. Hence his liability to be imposed upon by designing persons. He made the same deficiency of worldly knowledge account for his selection of Morad to succeed the best and greatest of fathers. He himself having no intention to solicit more than suitable maintenance for a prince at Mecca, and seeing both of his elder brethren disqualified, he fondly hoped Morad's unrivalled genius in war might uphold the long-established glory of the family; and for that purpose, and that alone, he had hitherto supported the youth. The papers discovered at Delhi were elaborately proved, in his way, to be forgeries. Yet he candidly avowed a project to get peaceable possession of the capital, and to have the young Prince proclaimed heir-apparent. Then to explain his resort to open hostilities, the circumstance of Dara's giving poison to the Emperor was mentioned as an admitted and indisputable fact. The deleterious dose, indeed, by the interposition of Providence, instead of proving fatal, as intended, produced only an alarming illness, from which his Majesty happily recovered, contrary to the expectation of his people. The symptoms were certainly such as to afford ground for the foul imputation among the King's enemies, in a country where similar deeds are often done, and the Princess knew the report to have been in circulation. Aurungzeb professed utter astonishment when his sister declared the story an infamous falsehood, and demonstrated it by a thousand acts of filial affection to be totally inconsistent with Dara's character. He then assented, step by step, to her arguments in favour of the King's being the ablest and best of the brotherhood, except on the single point of orthodoxy. His asseverations of regret for waging iniquitous civil war under a delusion, were pronounced with an air of solemn sincerity, which a mind seldom duped, and little accustomed to the deepest shades of deliberating depravity, could not believe feigned. But when he came to touch on the present state of rebel affairs, the contrite Prince's desire to be reconciled to his father was quite unequivocal in relation to the cause. Morad had exhausted his treasury, a fact already known to the Princess, and his coadjutor, it was pretended, to assist him, had parted with the small pittance hitherto reserved for the day of devout retire-

ment. But all was totally insufficient to satisfy a licentious soldiery, whose pay, long in arrear, came to a trifle, in comparison with the donation demanded by them on the boy's pretended elevation to the throne. In short, the mutinous troops, if not soon paid, would deliver up both their leaders to Shah Jehan for condign punishment.—“Alas! Jehanara,” said he, “I who built my empty hopes on the stripling's wisdom and valour in the field of battle, have found him, by woful experience, everywhere else, silly capricious, and resentful, as a wilful child! Morad is perfectly unfit to reign! If I leave him, his only stay, the army will break into instant mutiny. Yet, when we part thus, both will be undone. I am ruined by taking part with him, yet have no other protector—none but Heaven above and Jehanara!” The Princess here undertook to obtain his pardon, and ultimately sufficient funds for his future pilgrimage, on condition that he would instantly leave Morad, and assist in retrieving Dara's affairs before departing for Mecca. Aurungzeb, apparently impatient to get away from the scene of contention so abhorrent to his disposition, demurred to the article requiring support to the King.—“But hear me, Jehanara,” said he, laying his hand upon hers, “I vow from this moment to renounce the cause of Morad, and renew my allegiance to Shah Jehan, if that injured monarch will permit the returning prodigal to throw himself at a father's feet.” The Princess, unable any longer to withhold entire belief from his accent, manner, and reiterated declarations, threw herself into his arms, calling him indeed her brother, who spoke like the guardian angel of their house, come to protect their parent in his decrepitude. Then stating that the empire could not otherwise be quieted, she tried to interest him for Dara with all the persuasive softness of woman's eloquence.—“I will, my beloved sister,” answered he, “if you command me; but alas! it will be vain if, as I believe, Dara have neither friends, troops, nor treasure remaining to contend against Suja.” Jehanara, with unsuspecting confidence, in the fulness of her heart, gave a detailed account of the King's resources, the names of the chiefs on whom he relied, and the exact amount of treasure, exceeding a million sterling, which the Emperor had by him, and was devising the means of sending safely to his eldest son.

The next day was fixed for Aurungzeb's interview of reconciliation with his father.—“Oh!” cried Jehanara, “let me hasten with these glad tidings, that I may once more see joy in the face of our venerable parent!”

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JAMES.—What meant the Princess by saying that no *poppy water* was needed to make her brother's head harmless?

BROWNIE.—The decoction of poppy heads, called *Poost*, is often administered to deposed Princes, and dangerous characters, to produce imbecility of mind. Morad himself was doomed to drink this *potion* before his death.

## CHAPTER XLII.

AURUNGZEB's protestations of an intention to change his course, and his professions of penitence, were utterly insincere. So artfully had he built falsehoods, which it was desired his sister should believe true, on facts he knew she was aware of, and so naturally appeared to repent of conduct bringing him into imminent peril, and to be overpowered by awakened affection for the memory of a beloved mother, whose name recalled the household ties of infancy, that everything feminine in Jehanara's own heart assured her of his contrition. Her reason likewise was deceived. Ignorant of the dissembler's secret coffers, certain of the mutinous state of Morad's army, she thought Aurungzeb repentant from fear of punishment, and virtuous when vice had ceased to promise aid to his ambition.

There are good men possessing, and bad ones affecting, superior purity of mind, who will not admit the existence of deliberate perjury and treachery in a man familiar with the inspirations of virtue. They exist in such characters, notwithstanding, and are seen more unveiled in the East than in the West. In regard to this "great Prince," he acted a part often rehearsed before in his dark cogitations. Foreseeing from the first many chances of failure in his rebellious career, he had tried to leave open a retreat to himself under the mask of religion. Could Dara's fortune have been actually in the ascendant, as the Princess fondly imagined, the plotting Dervise would have uttered in earnest the very words which were an atrocious lie under opposite circumstances. When his sister left him, Aurungzeb lost not a moment in making arrangements to profit by the important information which his insidious perfidy had extracted. He went immediately into close consultation with the Master-General of his spies. The subordinates of this department presently assuming appropriate disguises, insinuated themselves into the palace, and, backed by armed men, took post at all the gates of the fort, and beset every road or by-way leading to Delhi. Before midnight these active persons seized a messenger entrusted with a letter from the Emperor to King Dara, and brought him to their master, who remained awake in expectation of the event. The purport of this dispatch proved to be highly important, disclosing just what the captor anticipated. Writing under the joyful excitement of Jehanara's success, the poor Emperor communicated the whole of it to his favourite son; advised him of the departure of a million of money, on mules, by a particular route, and recommended immediate measures for re-instating himself in power.—"You have only the mad boy to deal with," concluded the old man.—"The detested hypocrite comes to-morrow to crave forgiveness, but he shall never go hence. I will have him chained and imprisoned ere he has been

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a breath in my sight." The person so pointedly indicated, smiled at the premature announcement of his fate. Meanwhile he sent for the Raja of Bhurtpoor, who had just arrived in the camp to worship the rising sun of the Moguls. This personage was chief of a Hindoo tribe, called Jauts, who still possess most of the territory between the capital cities. Aurungzeb sent him off secretly, assisted and watched by a party of Deccanny troops, to intercept the treasure going to Delhi. Every one of the mules was taken, and his rich load deposited in the rebel's coffers, though the Jauts, to this day, bear the blame of the robbery.

Shah Jehan, never suspecting the seizure of his letter, prepared to receive the penitent rebel. The warmth of his Majesty's resentment would not permit him to see things in the same light with his daughter; nor did he consult her about the equivocal conduct which he intended to adopt towards his son. Before the appointed hour, Aurungzeb solicited permission for a small guard of his own people to precede him to the Presence Chamber.—"A criminal like me," said he, "is too fearful to believe that he can be pardoned until he behold the face of his judge." The Emperor consented to admit the men, but he posted, in the adjoining haram, enough of Tartar women, well armed, to overpower them. The Prince at last appeared on his way to the fort with an immense retinue. These carrying maces, but wearing concealed arms besides, moved slowly in, and then filed along the ramparts until they got possession, without resistance, of the works on that side next the camp. It is to be recollected here, that the servants of a great man, except on long journeys or marches, go before him in the East. Aurungzeb still kept behind, purposely delaying, till a body of undisguised troops, entering the gate opened for him, and now held by his men, marched to the principal stations in the place. He then turned about himself, and went off in another direction. The impatience of Shah Jehan to accomplish his object being extreme, he had thought of nothing else, ordering his officers to concede every formality, but on no account to retard his visitor's approach. At length becoming fretful, he desired the latter's child, who arrived with the first party, to call the commandant and ask the cause of such unreasonable delay. That person came. "Who?" cried the Emperor—"the abominable Hadji, Meer Khan? Go, wretch, from our presence, and send hither thy master. Wherefore delays he?"—"The Prince Aurungzeb," replied his agent, very coolly, "is gone to pray in the tomb of the Great Akbar. This slave has been honoured with the command of the garrison, and the care of your Majesty's sacred person." The old man's rage subsided in a state of stupefaction, when he discovered himself signally overreached, and irremediably the captive of his son.

The political sapper had now advanced another stage in his dark operations. The odium of besieging a sovereign beloved like his father, was entirely averted by the stratagem of getting peaceable possession of his person. Besides, the resistance of Surat made

him aware of the irreparable loss of time, and probable repulse, at present fatal to his views, to which attacks on fortifications are liable. The next object which his interest required him to prosecute, was a final settlement of affairs with Morad. He and his trusty counsellor, Meer Khan, who could not reckon himself safe whilst the young Prince exercised power so capriciously, having matured their plan of proceedings, commenced the execution of it. Select emissaries were sent into the lines of the Guzerat troops, to blow those sparks of discontent, that had long existed, into a flame. To illustrate the system followed on this occasion, I shall give one specimen of the conduct of those incendiaries. Mixing in the crowd of idlers who lounge in the market-places of a standing camp, one of them led the conversation from the news of the morning to the grand military subject of pay. "You are lucky fellows, gentlemen—how fortunate it is to have an Emperor for your General!" exclaimed the warrior of the Deccan. "It would be more so," replied several, in a growling laugh, "if we got salt as well as hard knocks."—"Salt! Such far-famed soldiers speaking of *salt* merely! Pray, what might his Majesty's donation amount to, for giving him the throne?"—"They had received nothing whatever as yet."—"Indeed! that is very unlucky, since, somehow or other, your Emperor has allowed all the treasure to get out of Agra; King Dara has taken all that he could find in Delhi; and Heaven knows where a rupee is to be got in any other place. But no doubt, brothers, you are paid a good deal in advance?"—"In advance!" cried they in derision. "What! in arrear?"—"Seven months and a-half."—"Have you really received no pay for seven months and a-half? Pray, gentlemen, how many months does his Majesty allow to the year?"—"Never above nine."—"Really I had no conception of this excellent discipline in the army of Guzerat. Such patience, forbearance, and quiet submission! Four and a-half months' subsistence to brave men for a twelve months' service, and no donation at all for making an Emperor! No doubt the gentlemen fiddlers and dancing ladies serve their master for still less?" This question seemed to touch a tender point, and it was answered in the negative with horrid abuse of those harmless persons who were alleged to devour the legitimate sinews of war. "Well," continued the mischief-maker, "what think you of our simple Governor of the Deccan? He gives us twelve months in the year, and pay is issued to us as regularly as we see the new moon. But to be sure it would not do otherwise with us. We should take the old way of making a general open his purse. Our fellows, indeed, are all men of spirit, who wont submit to ill-usage—that is, gentlemen, they are not so well disciplined as you." When the rogue disappeared, the immense groups, collected to hear the discussion, took up the same topic among themselves. With the deliberative wisdom of a mob, they resolved unanimously that the soldiers of Akbar the Second were men of spirit too, no better disciplined, nor disposed to submit to worse usage than their neighbours; and whereas no money existed any where, they would

demand both their arrears and gratuity immediately. One party proposed further to begin business by putting their royal debtor in that sort of pillory which the instigator hinted at—a resource not uncommon with Indian armies. It consists in seating the delinquent on a gun, exposed without head-dress to the noon-day heat, until he satisfy the demands of his men. To the honour of a portion of the troops, however, they refused to see their renowned commander subjected to this humiliation. The opportune appearance of Aurungzeb, not by any means accidental, prevented a brawl, both sides instantly concurring in favour of an appeal to him. The ungracious knaves, surrounding his elephant accordingly, within Morad's hearing, bellowed for "justice," ay, justice to be administered between them and the chosen judge's acknowledged sovereign. The arch dissembler, ejaculating and gesticulating wonder and sorrow, disclaimed any right of interference; but to put down such unseemly discontents, he offered a donation to meet the men's immediate wants, and to advance them a month's pay on the first day of every moon from that date, if, it was insidiously added, his Majesty would permit him. He, and all who heard the offer, knew that his Majesty could not decline it an instant without driving the petitioners to fury, pillage, and perhaps his destruction. This paymaster, who promptly disbursed the amount, meant and found the act equivalent to an enlistment of the receivers. From that day the Prince, under whom they had fought, conquered, and too often rioted in plundered wealth, lost his authority over them. The martial axiom, *no silver no soldier*, suits the warriors of all nations as well as the Swiss; and Aurungzeb proved the converse of the proposition equally true.

But while nibbling with termetic power, like a white ant hidden in its foul tunnel, till he thus cut through the roots of his brother's greatness, severing it from the only soil in which it could grow, he continued smiling and caressing the victim, as a glutton pampers a creature to prepare it for the shambles. He humbly recommended Shalista Khan, of betraying memory, to be left in charge of the Emperor's person, and then entreated Akbar the Second to expedite his inauguration at the city of inherited empire, called Delhi. Meer Khan for his services at Summinghur, received into favour, and making himself agreeable as formerly, was declared Vizier. Seduced, apparently, by these two, Aurungzeb began to partake of the gaieties of the new court. The order of march was soon given. When they reached Muttra, the younger Prince, with delighted surprise, received an invitation from his austere brother to a revel, at which, among other attractions scarcely more becoming a devotee, some lately purchased damsels of surpassing beauty were to dance. The party turned out select, and the licentious entertainment entirely to the taste of the principal guest. Towards the conclusion, the French brandy began to circulate.—"Come, Aurungzeb," cried Morad, "we desire to see that long face shortened, and your teeth at the window some times! Why, you have prayed and groaned

enough to save fifty sinners already; besides, you are going to Mecca, man—what is the use of being a walking mosque here? You shan't be such a fool at our court! Take this cup, my Dervise; it will cheer your heart without damaging your soul a bit—'tis water of life—not wine at all. Old Facquier, you shall have my own Hyder's lap for your pillow, and we will take this Cashmerian wench of yours to watch us when drunk." Thus pressed, the pious Prince actually drank the brandy, making wry faces as it descended his inexperienced throat like molten lead. But after affecting to talk nonsense and hiccup involuntarily for some time, he suddenly clapped both hands to his belly, as if seized with the cholic, and ran out of the tent. Morad got into a maudlin fit of laughter, thinking that his grave brother left the party to escape the ridicule of being seen intoxicated.—"Hyder," cried he, "follow the walking mosque, take care of him, and tell us to-morrow what he does—another cup, Tutty! It has lost its heat—it is weak stuff now to what it was at Ahmedabad, Tutty! How shall we reward the walking mosque?"—"Has not your Majesty promised his Highness a crore of rupees?"—"Yes, Tutty, but 'tis not enough; he has been very obliging, and is a good fellow now. We will give him, besides, a fleet and army to capture the holy city, and become Sheriff of Mecca. Issue our orders to that effect, Tutty! And ho, wench, bid your sisters strip, strip, and dance as we fall asleep." He sunk into insensibility, and was soon in dead repose.

Aurungzeb, on going away, sent people to circulate, as the news of the evening, throughout his brother's camp, that Morad, jealous of his interference in paying the troops, had attempted to poison him.—"Aurungzeb," added they, "is extremely ill now, and expected to die before morning." The men, as anticipated, expressed great indignation, and avowed their resolution to avenge the death of their benefactor. Enquiry confirmed the report of his illness, and the men flew to arms to protect or avenge their benefactor. Finding the plot ripe, its contriver proceeded apace to the development. When Meer Khan retired, the girl in whose lap the unconscious Prince was lying, removed his sword. Two ruffians entered and began to put fetters on his limbs. Morad, awakened by their rough handling, uttered a loud execration, and groped in vain for his side-arms. Aurungzeb, taking alarm, thrust his head past the curtain of the door and called out,—"If he resists, stab him!"—"Perjured fiend," cried the lost Morad, staring like one seeing his bereavement in a vision. "Perjured fiend!" was the only remonstrance that ever reached the traitor's ears. His ruined brother, as it passed his lips, relapsed into the same stupor from which he had been roused.

The army, rending the air with shouts at this event, now increasing a different and more profitable inauguration of majesty, ratified the nefarious transaction. Aurungzeb, however, made two more marches with his late Sovereign in chains, to be certain that the deposition was sanctioned, and then sent him, unsupported, un-



lamented by a single person who bore arms, to the great state prison of Gualior.

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## CHAPTER XLIII.

I HAVE hitherto omitted to mention conduct highly honourable to Major-General Michael de Sylva, at the beginning of the disastrous flight from Summoughur. This distinguished officer, attended by a field assistant, or what it now were affectation not to Frenchify into *Aid-de-camp*, pressed through the scene of tumult and horror to report that, by the meritorious exertions of General de Jungle, he had been able to re-unite part of the Malwa force, which now waited for his Majesty's orders. He received brief instructions to repair with the remaining infantry and artillery to the fort of Ajmeer. His retreat thither was, in consequence, effected unopposed, perhaps unperceived, by the enemy.

Dara reached the forest beyond Muttra before anything remarkable occurred among his followers. Steelbow rode sullenly in the train, deserted for a time by his courageous troopers, who took advantage of the confusion to gallop off and deposit their enormous booty in places of safety. The Pilean chief, who shone with such signal brilliance in the field, now appeared in a less favourable aspect. One day seeing the King in a melancholy mood by himself, he pushed alongside of him, and began in a style of indelicate familiarity, to speak his mind on the loss of the battle. His discourse, in Hindostanee, interlarded with English oaths, can only be imitated. "And d—n my buttons, after I had settled the hash of the left wing, and made every man-jack of them shew a leg, I did not expect to be turning my buttocks on them now. The rest of us too, beat both King Sawney and the roundheads out and out! Then after all we did for you, what must you do, without ever saying, gentlemen, by your leave, but jump into the prize ring yonder, for it was just like that. Now to be sure, every body thought you dead, and took to his scrapers.—Faith, I think you had just as well have died; for to be plain with you, King Dara, I would not give sixpence for your crown."

Dalbracken having been accidently behind, had only heard the last sentence, when he interrupted the orator. "Mr Steelbow," cried he in a tone of stern decision, "if you dislike his Majesty's service, beg permission to leave it—but forbear to address him in that tone again! Be pleased to fall back, and take your place in the rear!" added he; and the other obeyed mechanically, astounded at such a reprimand from one who scarcely ever gave a reproof to his own personal servants. But the surprise subsiding, he replied with sufficient boldness, "When told to consider himself dismissed, he

thought proper to alter his deportment, muttering however, "Had I known you were all going to play the fool, and then wig one in this way, I would have left my bones yonder, like the Doctor and Bethel, instead of being turned adrift here, to be killed by wild beasts or robbers in these ugly jungles."—"Dalbracken," said the King, stopping his horse, "though I do not understand your language, I fear you have been speaking harshly to our brave companion.—Fowlad Khan! your sword has served me, and I shall not find fault with your tongue. The friends of the unfortunate have a right to complain.—Forgive him, Ameer-ool-Omerah, and let us all hope for better days!" Steelbow, exhibiting an odd mixture of penitence and awkward pride, tried to make out an apology by protesting his good intentions. "Since his Majesty interposes," said Dalbracken, my remarks to you are cancelled."—"Now," continued Dara, "we shall have no strife among ourselves. But tell us, my gallant friend, by what miracle of fortune you escaped on the field? I distinctly saw a rocket strike your back." The hero of the Torn Beaver, brightening up, commenced a long story, which I shall take the liberty of making short. "It is very true," answered he, "the rocket came whizzing, pounce upon my loins, and would have gone through too, and killed me as dead as old King Charles, had it not been for the very thing that poor Cambridge and all of you quizzed me about eternally—tut! I can't tell it in their lingo, but you may explain to his Majesty, as how the least thing in the way turns a rocket to one side—so the snout of it just lighted on my prog, glanced off, and passed away under this elbow."—"What!" asked Dalbracken, no longer in a serious mood, "is it possible that you owe your life to a gammon of bacon lashed to your rump?"—"Just the old Europe ham," rejoined Steelbow with a broad grin. The Ameer-ool-Omerah, recollecting the effect of this unclean food on Moslem ears, translated the novel article of defensive armour, "dried flesh," and prefaced an account of its efficacy by a few hints of the old soldier's devotion to the belly. Dara, willing to forget calamity, joined in the jokes which followed, and resuming his own spirits, resuscitated those of his drooping followers. Inviting others to contribute anecdotes, stories, or songs, agreeably to Oriental custom, he set the example by reciting Persian odes, and frequently his own compositions. These were attentively listened to. Without the least air of condescension, he continued during the journey to claim no more than the friendship of fellow-sufferers, who could not withhold admiration and respect from one so accomplished, amiable, and unfortunate. Before they arrived at Delhi, every one had resolved to follow him to the last. In this capital, without yet knowing the cause of his disappointment, he vainly expected intelligence and supplies from his father. As neither arrived, he took what money the public treasury contained, and pursued his journey to Ajmeer.

The Prince believed his dethronement final; yet time, he was wont to say, had a capacious womb, which might give birth to acci-

dents calculated to elevate him as suddenly as he had been depressed. But he conceived that honour, under any circumstances, required him never to desist from asserting his rights. He seemed at times to derive a proud satisfaction from calmly smiling in Ruin's face. When Dalbracken sat behind him on the Elephant one day, in passing through the country now called the principality of Jypore, Dara, as if awaking from a reverie, began to talk in this manner: "Do you observe the outline of that chain of small hills which the haze of distance magnifies into high mountains?"—"Yes, sire; that feature, together with the sandy valleys and clear streams, makes a beautiful landscape, compared with the uniform flatness and turbid rivers of the country which we have just left behind us."—"No," replied the King, "my mind perceives no beauty in nature at present—in that rocky tableland I see my own destiny, towering, to remote eyes, above humanity. How nobly the marble ridge rises, its peaks seemingly invested with the mantle of heaven, till yonder dark chasm opens before its fairest eminence gleaming in sunshine."—"Your Majesty," answered the European, "describes appearances truly. But what is the reality? Where the line of these summits is broken, the descent leads to the fairy palace and flourishing city of Ambere: and as I look on the other side, the range stretches majestically forward to the limits of vision."—"No, Dalbracken—that impassable gulf is Summoghur! The fine extent of upland, beyond it, foreshews the career of the fortunate bigot." Perceiving that his comforter now became silent and thoughtful in his turn, the King's elasticity of spirit recoiled to gayer reflections. "Well, my Chief of Nobles," said he, "as we are both prophets, we must wait for events to tell us which is the best. Your interpretation of my vision is, after all, just as good as my own. But, as Hafiz says, it is folly to pry into futurity."—Then he repeated some favourite lines of that Persian poet, thus translated by the most accomplished of oriental scholars.

Speak not of fate! Ah, change the theme,  
And talk of odours, talk of wine;  
Talk of the flowers that round us bloom:  
'Tis all a cloud, 'tis all a dream,  
To love and joy thy thoughts confine,  
Nor hope to pierce the sacred gloom.

In the neighbourhood of Ajmeer, his Majesty was met by General de Sylva, who answered the enquiry, whether he had possession of the fort, and if all were well, with his affirmative monosyllable. This place, situated on a hill, and called Taraghur, became his temporary residence whilst the King arranged his future plans.

The warlike provinces beyond the Indus, governed by Mohabit Khan, an uncompromising nobleman, true to his master, still remained faithful. The Rajpoots had not yet shewn any disposition to renounce his alliance. Suja, expecting no terms from his intolerant

brother, was again in arms. Dara therefore decided on the policy of establishing a system of communication and co-operation with those distant points, in order to unite the strength of all his friends against Aurungzeb. By industrious perseverance, the obstacles to the completion of this grand design were finally surmounted. The strongholds of Malwa still maintaining their allegiance, Steelbow proceeded to reassemble the scattered army, and to connect the line of operations with Suja's force in Behar. Choosing a position from which he could keep up an intercourse with all who favoured his cause, the King himself formed a camp, fortified by the science of his adherents, within the hills of Ajmeer, beyond Pokkur. Here the Princess Nadira joined him with all her train. Appearances now greatly revived the hopes of the loyal party, when they saw the wide regions connecting the further confines of Bengal and Candahar once more combined in support of the rightful sovereign. The part assigned to Jeswunt Sing was to follow the movements of the enemy, in whatever direction, and having got between him and Agra, to release Shah Jehan from imprisonment. The Rajpoot Chief, professing to keep the treaty of Oudypore inviolate, readily took the field again with a powerful army.

Being sensible that the conduct of the Rana will appear either very improbable or childishly unprincipled, I wish to explain it somewhat to the moralists of the West. His superstition was just as sincere as Aurungzeb's devotion, and it had about the same influence on his moral character. He never took a step in public affairs without a temporary feeling, at least, of its being justifiable and politic. But no dread of the world to come, no manifestation of divine will, ever drove him from the known path of interest. Physicians allege that predisposition must exist before contagion can produce the plague. In like manner, the mind of the Hindoo Prince had always to undergo a preparatory process, which disclosed consequent advantages before he could see any omens to sanction a change of measures. Were success certain, and the future ability of Dara to fulfil his engagements unquestionable, Jeswunt would behold nothing in heaven or earth to shake his fidelity. But when about to struggle in a doubtful cause, the whole of animate and lifeless nature was too likely to teem with forbidding prodigies.

Dara certainly dreaded a second sternutation: but to distrust him openly at present could not avail; and a blow struck by him immediately, might give the subsequent contest a new aspect.

The people of Guzerat, abandoned to anarchy and to hordes of robbers, claimed the King's protection. He complied with their entreaties, so far as to garrison their principal forts with enough of troops to repress intestine disorders. The relatives of Ibrahim Alli Khan, the youth who was so exemplarily punished for oppression, having behaved well during the conspiracy at Delhi, the young gentleman was appointed to the command of Ahmedabad. General de Jungle, who had learnt from books that wounds in the back were exceedingly disgraceful, remained long confined to his

bed with what he chose to call "dorsal impingements," inflicted by the hoofs of the Deccanese cavalry passing over his nether parts, while his head lay safe in a wolf's earth at Summoghur. A spear or two had also been poked gently into him, a test common on such occasions, to know whether a man is dead or only wounded. But on recovering, he returned to rule over Surajpore; and Michael, the taciturn, to govern Mandoo. This eminent character, whose adherence to good faith and honesty in all changes was sufficient distinction, had gained new reputation on his march to Ajmeer. Passing Jypore, the capital of the celebrated Hindoo philosopher Jy Sing, he was invited to the court of that great improver of the taste of his countrymen in the arts, and treated with high distinction. The Raja, keeping aloof from politics at that time, sought Michael's acquaintance, in hopes of receiving accessions to his knowledge, of which Fame, agreeably to her usual practice of making a great man all-accomplished, had assigned a boundless store to the destroyer of Baroach. The Prince and his sages, finding the report true, that the Major-General, like many other wise men, talked little, accommodated his taciturnity by putting, what lawyers call, leading questions, in astronomy and architecture, as well as concerning the law of projectiles, of which he was so renowned a master. Mike of the Wood, in his good nature, giving the answer which he saw was expected in every case, demonstrated the most profound theorems, and solved the most intricate problems, with a monosyllable. The seekers of wisdom thus confirmed in the conclusions which they had arrived at, proclaimed to the world a truth of which they were but partly conscious, that heroism was the least valuable quality of General de Sylva's genius.

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#### CHAPTER XLIV.

AURUNGZEB had now thrown off a disguise so long and carefully worn in public that it began to have the inconvenience of deceiving shallow friends, though it did not screen his projects from acute enemies. Exercising all the functions of sovereignty, he still sought, however, to conciliate the feelings of his father's subjects, by styling himself "the Vicegerent of Shah Jehan." He perceived that the power possessed by Jeswunt Sing, if vigorously and judiciously wielded, might, in the present state of parties, either upset or confirm his usurpation of the empire. No time, therefore, was lost in striving by every means to gain over that Chief. Not only were the terms of Dara's treaty to be conformed to, but proposals made to appoint the husband of the *Princess of Surajpore* perpetual Viceroy of Malwa, provided she married Meer Khan. This implied her previous profession of Islamism, which her uncle promised boldly, but he wanted, naturally enough, the usurper's heir-apparent for a nephew. Mean-

while the Rana, unable to determine whose scale had the best chance of preponderating, availed himself of that and other pretences for giving no decisive answer when intreated to declare himself. Aurungzeb, thought he, is certainly favoured by some supernatural being—vanquish, vanquish him, still he gets the victory! However, the old Emperor has been fortunate all his life hitherto; he, and Dara, and Suja, are three to one against the persecutor—yes, I will join them to destroy the *persecutor*, as I swore to Darr Beg Khan on the hilt of my sword! Agreeably to the resolution taken in this soliloquy, he marched towards the place appointed by the King. But continuing to ruminate on the subject, he recollected that the man whom fortune mysteriously never forsook, was actually in possession of the sovereignty of the Moguls, the unlucky Dara far off, Suja's army composed of feeble Bengalees, and the Ameer-ool-Omerah absent from the field too. His horse unhappily interrupted these meditations by starting and cocking his ears at three ravens feasting on the carcase of a bullock. The Rana pleaded afterwards, and it is no more than justice to believe him, that any number of pairs, in which these ominous birds appear in India, would not have altered his purpose.—“Who but a maniac, however,” said he, “could persist in an undertaking, after beholding the rare and astounding phenomenon of three ravens that met his eyes?” He accordingly countermarched his army, and went over to Aurungzeb. This reinforcement proved at the time extremely welcome to the usurper. Suja, anticipating most important results from the release of his father, hurried rather rashly into the province of Allahabad, in order to draw the rebels thither, that Jeswunt might advance immediately upon Agra. In consequence, he found himself now unsupported, about to encounter the forces of his enemy and late ally. Aurungzeb, however, took care not to put much trust in one of such a vacillating mind. The haughty Rajpoot, on his part, felt indignant at this want of confidence, thinking promises of future reward worth little from a Prince who thus treated him coldly in the hour of need. Yet, as an early triumph seemed certain, he saw no reason why he should not take a share of it. They met the army of Bengal on the field of Cadwa. Suja's artillery, at the beginning of the action, did great execution, and threw his enemy into confusion. Jeswunt, who commanded in a second line of cavalry, called suddenly for his astrologer, and demanding what planet was in the ascendant, heard that Saturn presided.—“Villain,” cried he, “why said you not so before? Nothing but disgrace can attend us on *this side* to-day.” No sooner said than done. He made his Rajpoots face about and attack the usurper's rear. They were not long in dispersing the camels and infantry, after which a convenient space was devoted to the plunder of the baggage. Jeswunt then decamping with all possible expedition, set off towards his own country fully, though erroneously, of opinion that Suja remained victorious. He wrote by express to Dalbracken, as his particular friend, denying his having ever intended to desert the King, claiming great praise for his

share in defeating Aurungzeb, and announcing his determination to set the Emperor at liberty as soon as he could reach Agra on his return. This intelligence induced Dara to leave his Ameer-oool-Omerah in charge of the fortified camp, and to proceed himself into the plains of Ajmeer to second the expected enterprize. The arrival of Shah Jehan at his head-quarters would, in all probability, have been the signal of desertion to all the rebel soldiers who universally venerated the name of the aged monarch. The hopes and fortunes of millions now awaited the fulfilment of the Rajpoot's renewed promise. Jeswunt approached the gates of Agra fairly intent on entering them; and the Governor having no adequate means of holding out, was ready to surrender. But on the last day of his march towards it, the news overtook him of Suja's army having once more fled, and given Aurungzeb another victory. This was the subject of other reflections with him. Yet the Rana came to no resolution, until, in crossing the darkest of those deep ravines that intersect the road near the east bank of the Jumna, a hungry jackal gave one of his prolonged yells close to Jeswunt's stirrup. This portentous sound made desistence from his present purpose a religious duty, which it were a tempting of Providence to disregard, not less than fighting under the predominance of Saturn. The minarets of the city of sovereignty gleamed full in view, as if offered to his grasp. Turning from the sight, like the hydrophobic from water, the Rajpoot Chief passed the river at a different ferry, and posted home.

Aurangzeb, leaving a sufficient force to follow up the advantage gained at Cadwa, returned to Agra, which he garrisoned strongly, and then hastened to Delhi, whence he wrote letters intimating his elevation to all the potentates of Asia acknowledged by his family.

A blunder committed by one of the scribes on this occasion, caused a misunderstanding which suggested to Dalbracken the policy of turning the usurper's weapons against himself. In making an inventory of the presents sent to Shah Abbas, the man inadvertently wrote at the top, "for the *Prince*," instead of the *Emperor*, of Persia. The substitution of an inferior style, for the proper title, was construed into intentional insult. The unfortunate list, accompanying the articles designed to propitiate friendship, happened also to arrive at court when his Persian Majesty was drunk. Abbas the Second foamed with rage, calling names very impolitely, in noticing his brother of India's doings, and insulted the Mogul Ambassador. Nor did he grow calm when sober. War was declared, and an army levied for the avowed purpose of invading Hindostan. Dreading nothing so much at that time as hostilities with a great foreign power, Aurungzeb tried explanation, apology, moderate concession, but in vain. What mightily increased his apprehensions, the principal officers of the Indian army were by birth or descent of the invader's nation. The first minister himself, on this account, began to be strictly watched. The vigilance of

the secret agents, employed for the purpose, remained not long unrewarded. A letter bearing every mark of authenticity, from the King of Persia to Jaffer Khan the Vizier, fell into their hands. It likewise bore evidence of being an answer to one from the traitor, inviting his native sovereign to avail himself of the present distractions to conquer the empire of the Moguls: assuring him of support from all his countrymen, then unwillingly serving a foreign master. His Majesty, Shah Abbas, according to Eastern custom, quoting these passages, signified his gracious intentions of coming instantly to claim the assistance of his loving subjects so loyally tendered; and to give India the blessings of his sway. No measure succeeds so well as trickery against a trickster. Though the whole of his document and its discovery were the result of Dalbracken's contrivance, Aurungzeb suspected nobody of being capable of artifice like his own. He had none of his favourite counsellors by him to remove the alarming perplexity which now arose in his mind. Like the inmates of a ship when fire is smelt but not seen, and no land in sight, he believed his affairs in extreme peril, yet knew not what to do. Meer Khan having driven Suja into the fortified places of his province, and the Princess Roshenara being still in Agra, both were summoned to give advice in this awful emergency. Meanwhile, to prevent any act of treason, troops were ordered to surround the houses of all the Persian noblemen in the city, including that of the Vizier, and to keep them in close confinement. He feared an immediate insurrection after all, and deliberated on the propriety of anticipating it, as well as the arrival of his advisers, by a general execution of the suspected persons. The advantages and disadvantages of a massacre, shewed themselves in such conflicting lights to this great politician, that his judgment continued on the rack. But, postponing the grand question, he bethought him of soothing his anxiety for the present, and also appearing attentive to public business, by strangling and treading out the bowels of one or two Persians a day. With all this moderation, however, he succeeded no better than Mr Guttleshorpe in the middle course. The condemned lords penetrated his designs, and the individuals specially invited to attend him, instead of accepting the invitation, barricaded their gates, armed their adherents, and prepared to die in self-defence. The next act of this farce of state, so gravely performed, was peculiarly characteristic of the head and heart of Aurungzeb, whenever emergencies threw him on the resources of his own intellect. The *men* were out of his power; at least he must incur an unprofitable expense of character by murdering the wives and children of each family to get at its head. But recollecting that three hundred Persian *horses* in the Emperor's stables were at his disposal, he caused the beautiful animals to be led out and inhumanly put to death before the doors of the accused noblemen. This imbecile barbarity, so far from producing intimidation, excited ridicule and abhorrence. It did not seem improbable that the means adopted to repress an imaginary revolt, might



occasion a real one, when the Princess Roshenara appeared and restored quiet. Hearing her brother's story ; " I think," said she, " the poor merchant of Surat is avenged now. You have just been deceived, as you deceived him." Without hesitation, she went straight to the Vizier's Haram, explained Aurungzeb's panic, and in a few hours every thing became tranquil in the city.

Shah Abbas died before executing any of his threats, and left the Princes of India to end their internal discords.

This state of confusion into which the capital was thrown, not having extended further, proved of little service to the King. The partial success of the stratagem, however, led him to try the effect of supernatural agency on the spiritual pretensions which had contributed so powerfully to elevate his brother. The campaign which he organized in consequence of this determination, is perhaps the best illustration on record, not a satire by any means, of glorious war.

In the district of Marwar, not far from the fortified camp, lived a woman eighty years of age, called Bistamia. Possessed of a castle and a good estate, she had long purchased popularity by giving alms very liberally to mendicant priests and other sturdy beggars, who wandering everywhere, were grateful enough to spread the fame of their patroness. Of the multitudes who flocked to her residence, many thousands, thinking the quarters too good to leave, at last hutted themselves under her walls. When thus formed into a numerous community, these sanctified persons began to make additions to the worthy lady's bounty, by appropriating sometimes more than a tithe of the neighbouring property. They commenced by going to work singly, but to avert the scandal of being treated as thieves, it was soon found necessary to proceed in detachments, which being still opprobriously called gangs, the saints formed an army that speedily confuted the scorers, and commanded respect, by setting fire to the houses and importing all the moveables, within a day's journey, into Bistamia's lands. The new Raja of Joudpore (or Marwar) having submitted to the present ruler of the Moguls, was called on to disperse these robbers, and chastise their protectress for abetting spoliation. Dara by this time had a Bramin as his agent at her castle, who, agreeably to his instructions, promised a supply of arms to resist the presumptuous interference with her jurisdiction, about to be attempted. — " Madam," said this functionary, in the name of his employer, " you are as devout in your way, as high in the esteem of holy men among the Hindoos, and are said to enjoy as much authority over the other world as Aurungzeb is believed by the Mussulmans to possess. Why should you not be a General, and thence a sovereign like him ?" Bistamia, having drank deeply of ghostly flattery before, had occasionally suspected herself predestined to grandeur. Yet, without displaying any enthusiasm, she remarked calmly, that having much wealth and little of life remaining, she was ready to stake both for the chance of appearing as a great queen in future history, by which she meant, the tales of the

itinerant story-tellers. Dara's present of swords and spears being added to their bludgeons, for none of her warriors could shoot, the old woman took the field at the head of a naked rabble. The Raja in martial array, at the head of the best soldiers of a warlike tribe, advancing to disperse them, sustained as complete a defeat as any in the annals of battles. A party of the usurper's forces, then in the vicinity, collecting what revenue they could get, resolved to go themselves, and at once exterminate these troublesome fanatics. They were broken at the first onset, cudgelled, hacked, and stabbed in flying, after an efficient manner, which the most veteran survivors declared that they never saw equalled. Nothing would now satisfy the victors but the dominion of India and the imperial dignity for their illustrious General.—“Delhi and the Peacock throne!—Lead us on!”—rung in the ears of the astonished beldame, and forward she went. The vanquished in her two first battles endeavoured to account for their overthrow, and succeeded, much to the brave old woman's advantage. I allow that, in general, the most luminous exposition of a defeat by the loser, is rarely so well received as the simple announcement of a victory. But this was an extraordinary case. Both Moguls and Rajpoots declared their enemies to be invulnerable at all times, and invisible when dealing their mortal blows in fight. Yet there was, they averred, nothing wonderful in the fact. General Bistamia, being a notorious witch, treated her soldiers at every return of the dark half of the moon with an infernal broth, boiled in human skulls, and made of owls, bats, lizards, and little children's flesh. This mess, rendering those who partake of it fearless and indestructible, was supposed to be the devil's receipt for conquering the world. In consequence, all the detachments of troops on her way took to their heels. Pillage, slaughter, and conflagration attested her claim to martial renown on the route to Agra. About five days' journey from that city, at Narnoul, Aurungzeb posted an army to arrest this hurricane of devastation. It stood in trembling expectation of the monkey banner of the saints which now approached, displaying Hoonymaun rampant in dirty red. Bistamia came, saw, and conquered. So easy, sanguinary, and glorious did the victory appear, that the heroes would no longer delay the exaltation of their leader to the highest of earthly dignities. Aurungzeb's counsellors were now with him. But though Bistamia, rising like himself, had grown a formidable rival, and placed him in a predicament universally thought alarming, the difficulty was one which his own genius was equal to overcome.—“What!” said he, “do the faithful dread lest the powers of darkness should overthrow those of light?” He made out some Arabic scrolls, and tied them on the points of spears, giving a commission to Meer Khan to hasten up with a fresh army, read a proclamation to the soldiers, and fall upon the impious insurgents under the superior influence of his spells. The address to the troops reminded them of the celestial reinforcement which descended to him when left helpless on the field of Summonghur; adding, that the scrolls borne before each squadron

were inscribed by the angel of death,—“and I tell ye,” concluded Aurungzeb, “when the awful characters which they display shall be lifted above the first rank of the enemy, the host of hell, that has hitherto sustained those vagabonds, will take to flight and leave the infidel robbers a prey to your exterminating swords!” The Prince’s reputation for power over the invisible world being fully equal to Bistamia’s, the soldiers who had not yet faced the female conqueror, marched courageously against her. It is lamentable to record, that the wisdom which planned and the valour which realised so many victories, should have fallen from their high estate to indulge in low debauchery after the battle of Narnoul. In truth, these redoubted warriors, having captured several cartloads of spirits and opium, were celebrating the old lady’s coronation after a fashion discreditable to the sacerdotal profession, when Meer Khan, with his consecrated scrolls, beat up their quarters. The drunken rabble found no more mercy than they had given. Ambition and its realm, queen Bistamia and her subjects, were in a few hours reduced to a heap of carnage. This great woman had no doubt faults, like other personages in the same career, who stand in high relief to the eyes of mankind. But with the assistance of a Junglian secretary, a map, and a diagram or two, it were easy to demonstrate her right to the appellation and honours of a hero, which ought not in justice or gallantry to be withheld, merely because she was an old woman.

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## CHAPTER XLV.

THUS the attempt to create dissension between Aurungzeb and his adherents, the expedition of the Maharana, and the bloody campaign of Bistamia, were all frustrated by his continued good fortune rather than wise conduct. Time began to augment his power and to diminish the hopes of Dara’s friends by imperceptible degrees.

The common people, by whom alone this good Prince was really beloved, submitting from age to age to the strongest, like beasts of burden, never conceived that they had the right or the ability to assist a favourite competitor for dominion over them. Still the wary usurper avoided any decisive effort to terminate the struggle, lest the chances of war should turn against him. Steelbow, in possession of Malwa, had proved himself no trifier in the field: and the European fortifications rendered the King’s encampment impregnable, even to Meer Khan, in that elevated position. His determination to attack neither, and the delay which consequently occurred in devising more astute expedients, while the royal party was too weak to act on the offensive, tended greatly to let his authority strengthen itself, as masons allow an arch to consolidate before

they move the centering. Aurungzeb, however, was none of those systematic rulers who make one grand measure evolve a thousand, and govern kingdoms on generalised principles. On his plan every disorder in the body politic required a particular remedy, and he dealt chiefly in nostrums of his own preparation. If gout appeared in the great toe, he cut off the great toe, and if itch broke out on the knuckles, he applied the actual cautery, vulgarly called a red-hot iron : and would probably have grinned sapiently at any learned leech who should prescribe temperance and cleanliness, or propose to throw a little meadow saffron or flowers of sulphur into the constitution of the state to cure local diseases. He therefore entertained no such deep projects as that of leaving his brother's influence to dilapidate, while his own acquired solidity according to universal laws which regulate the moral world. A secret envoy was striving in vain to corrupt Mohabet Khan, the governor of Candahar : and various offers had been made and reiterated to Jeswunt, without success, until the infallible Meer Khan himself undertook to detach that unsteady Chief from his present professed connection and real neutrality. The Rajpoot, calculating on the King's leniency, had hitherto violated the treaty fearlessly, though his eldest son, remaining a hostage, was liable to be put to death. But the only male child which he had besides, dying about this time, the survivor became an object of much more solicitude. Dalbracken, with whom the Rana kept up a correspondence, very friendly in form, had lately warned him that though Dara might not kill the boy for the father's misdeeds, he should be advised, on the next signs of disaffection, to make him a Mussulman. "At least," added the inexorable correspondent, "whatever his Majesty may do, I am resolved to have the lad to *dine* with me, whenever I see you disposed to join the rebels again." These threats, so likely to be executed, frightened the Chief of the Hindoos, far more for his progeny, thus exposed to loss of caste and irreversible tainture, than the doubtful prospect of decapitation. He pleaded, with some shew of justice, that his own safety and the peace of his country required him to temporize so far as to receive the enemy's agents. He pretended, however, to reject Meer Khan's proposals, among other things, for espousing Eurasia, and all offers of political union, like those of previous emissaries. I shall afterwards advert to the sincerity of this declaration. Meanwhile, appearances did not gainsay these professions. Jeswunt in fact distrusted Aurungzeb extremely, suspecting him of an intention to fulfil none of his promises. Yet I may just mention here, that Meer Khan carried his point in making the Grand Prince adopt a plan for the recovery of his son, which must favour the usurper's views. Aurungzeb now marched from Delhi with a great army into Ajmeer. The Rana begged and received permission to pay him that ceremonious visit of respect due to a member of the Imperial family arriving in his neighbourhood. No sooner did Jeswunt enter the camp than he was put in chains, and thrown into rigorous confinement. In this

plight he came with the enemy before the last stronghold of the King. They erected batteries, and attacked the works vigorously, but after sustaining heavy loss, and having most of their guns dismounted by the defenders, they drew off the artillery altogether. According to the reports of spies, serious differences had arisen among the rebel Chiefs. These were confirmed by a miserable looking messenger, who having just escaped from the Rana's prison, brought a letter concealed in the scanty and solitary rag that covered his nakedness. This important communication stated, that the late repulse had occasioned a degree of disaffection among the leaders, which threatened a speedy dissolution of the usurper's authority. In consequence, several men holding high commands, who had deserted at Summonghur, earnestly desired to be reconciled to the King. One Dileer Khan in particular, imploring forgiveness, proposed to assist the escort of five hundred Rajpoots with his whole division, in rescuing Jeswunt Sing, and escaping in his company to the royal camp, if his Majesty would cause one of the gates to be thrown open, to receive the fugitives at a particular hour next morning. Dara regarded this intelligence as a sun-burst in the hour of his beclouded fortune. He precipitately issued orders to admit all who left the rebels and came to his post at the appointed time. Those whom he was wont to converse with on other subjects, if not to consult before giving his final commands, preserved a dead silence on this occasion. "How is this?" said he, observing their deportment, "one might think you preferred remaining here to returning to Delhi!"—"Since I must explain my dissent," replied Dalbracken, "it behoves me to tell your Majesty that I suspect treachery in these proposals."—"Treachery? how? in what does treachery appear?" demanded the King, considerably irritated. "Both of these men, sir, to whom our gates are to be opened, have been notorious traitors already. Jeswunt Sing, whom I feel ashamed of having first brought over, is an unprincipled changling, and a most dangerous instrument in the hands of an expert juggler like Aurungzeb."—"I care not what they have been!" rejoined Dara, "they are fellows who would worship the devil were he Emperor, and on that account will now support me. The Rana's description of the anarchy that prevails among the rebels is corroborated from all quarters: what is more natural than that he should wish to be with his only child under present circumstances? Am I, contrary to your own counsel, repeated a thousand times, to render offenders impenitent, and reject the offers of traitors returning to allegiance, when I want their services most?—If I should bar out all accused of *treachery*, where would my best friends stand?—Read that, Darr Beg Khan, and deem less harshly of others!" The letter thus put into the hands of the astonished Ameer-ool-Omerah, purported to be from himself to the Maharana, requesting his influence to obtain a confirmation of the government of Malwa from Aurungzeb, for which the writer promised to change sides, and marry the Sahibzadee. The tenor of this strange

document disclosed to the accused what he had often alleged, that Jeswunt's imprisonment was a deception practised with his own concurrence. Dalbracken was silenced most effectually in offering advice to a Prince at all times impatient of it, and who, while acting generously towards him, at present appeared to be running headlong into the meshes of a cunning enemy. Dileer Khan, the repentant deserter, was the pretended discoverer of this treasonable correspondence, which he secretly forwarded to the King, intreating him not to trust Darr Beg Khan, who at that crisis would, to serve his own iniquitous purposes, dissuade his Majesty from being reconciled to old friends.

The fatal morning commenced with violent commotion in Aurungzeb's camp, which ended in apparent fighting. Amidst discharges of matchlocks, a body of horse appeared in full flight, which after being hotly pursued, was fired upon by the artillery. Another scene quite similar succeeded. It was remarked that the cannon-shot which should play upon the fugitives, no where appeared tearing up the ground as it usually does. The foremost party were Rajpoots in dress, though many observed the whiteness of their faces. But as they approached, some five hundred in number, the King distinguished the person of Jeswunt Sing, and prepared to receive him. The Rajpoot Chief entered, and his followers, instantly discovered to be disguised Moguls, turning about, cut the royal guards to pieces, and kept possession of the gate, while Dileer Khan, presently followed by the whole rebel force, passed into the interior of the post.

The unfortunate King, embracing Jeswunt as a friend, was surrounded by the enemy before he became sensible of his situation. The kind reception, of which he knew himself to be so peculiarly unworthy, stung the Rajpoot with remorse.—“Fly great Dara, fly!” cried he “I have been compelled to betray you,—but restore my child,—give back my boy, I beseech you,—oh, surrender to his father the last offspring of Rama!” The horsemen waited the Rana's orders to seize the King, while he continued to offer escape as the price of his son, agitated by parental anxiety, and desirous also of making some reparation for the baseness of his conduct. But before he could get an answer, Dalbracken charged the circle, broke through, and scattered the enemy with a party of his own horse. Having rescued the King, he flourished his sword over Jeswunt's head,—“Miscreant!” cried he, “thy life is in my power, but this emblem shall save thee: live, to reap the harvest of infamy sown to-day! Die, when men tire of execrating thee, and let that impure soul transmigrate into the foulest bird that feeds on ordure! But never expect to see a living son, who may lament thy degradation!” In uttering this anathema, far more terrible than simple Christians may imagine, the enraged European tore the medallion from the traitor's neck, by breaking the gold chain. Then throwing what force he could collect, between the assailants and the royal tents, he hurried off the women in their carriages. This could be

effected only by desperate fighting, in which some of the best men perished. Dara, acting the part of a gladiator, was several times unhorsed, and retreated the last of his army, covered with the blood of faithless subjects.

The wretched survivors, without tents or provisions, having naught remaining but bare existence, which they saw little prospect of supporting, descended from the hills into the dreary forest that lies between Ajmeer and Guzerat. This inhospitable region is possessed by the Bheels, a race of rapacious savages who removed the scanty supplies which they could afford to the recesses of their woods, and returned only to waylay the straggling fugitives whom they murdered for the sake of their clothes. Still the sound of pursuit rung in the ears of the King's followers, at no great distance. They hastened amidst revolting and incredible hardships, into the open plain to seek shelter within the friendly walls of Ahmedabad. These were yet remote: but the hope of safety there, inspirited every heart to endure and persevere. Each conspicuous knoll, ravine, or tree, caused the poor people to enquire of those acquainted with the province, "How far are we from Ahmedabad?" For many days the answers raised moans of despondency, but their feeble voices began to cheer as the space diminished. At last they arrived about the dawn of day in sight of the minarets of the city. A halt was ordered, and a messenger dispatched to announce the King's approach.

Though not an eye had closed during the preceding night, all collected round the Prince with looks of dumb inquietude, that any delay should occur when deferred hope had come so near fulfilment: and instead of seeking repose to their jaded frames, they kept gazing on the buildings, as the rising sun made them one by one distinguishable. The man returned slowly on his wearied horse. No form of words can depict the expression of every countenance when he came near enough to be heard. No one dared to speak for fear of interrupting the answer which he had to deliver. The first and only words uttered by the melancholy messenger were, "the gates are shut against the King."

The wail of agonizing disappointment, and of affliction resigning hope, without acquiring the calmness of despair, which now burst from the ladies still following the ruined Queen, would have unmanned the sternest heart not already seared by calamity. The inferior women, tearing their hair and beating their breasts in utter distraction, uncovered their famished faces before Dara, and demanded if all must die. The boldest of the common soldiers, in that country little accustomed to restrain their emotions, threw themselves on the ground and wept aloud. The King made not a single remark on the monstrous ingratitude of Ibrahim Alli Khan, whom he had raised from insignificance to nobility, and the power which was thus used so inhumanly against himself. He doubtless felt acutely conscious of the sad error committed in the case of this youth and many others. He mistook increased exertion to

propitiate a patron, for an amendment of conduct founded on moral principle, the fatal similitude of which too often deceives the best Princes. The vain, conceited, and overbearing young man, instead of improving in character, had only added the deepest dissimulation to his former bad qualities, and now rejoiced in an opportunity to revenge the affront which he once suffered for plundering a helpless peasant.

Dara, after hearing that the gates of Ahmedabad were shut against him, remained silent for a few minutes. Then, with an unembarrassed air, he absolved all present from allegiance to him: and advised them to proceed to the city and submit to the adherent of the conqueror, before the pursuers should come up. "Farewell!" said he, "if ever Dara return in freedom, it will be to reign, and reward the fidelity of his friends." He next ordered the vehicles containing his family to follow him, as he turned away from the unhappy people and rode to a group of trees just visible on the furthest verge of the horizon.

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

THE carriages containing Nadira, and all that remained of her train, drawn by the miserable cattle, proceeded after the King. His son, a boy of twelve years of age, went last on the state elephant which his father rode at Summonghur, now driven by a brother of Azim Khan. Dalbracken, making hasty arrangements to send Mariam to Mandoo, escorted by the remnant of his horse under the command of Kirkland, resolved to attend the royal fugitives into Persia, which he believed to be their destination. Five only of the men would follow him in an expedition, which exposed them to the chance of falling into the hands of a merciless enemy, or to the certain horrors of the desert.

On approaching the trees with this small party, he dismounted, as the King appeared walking towards him alone, with a melancholy calmness in his gait, and a stoicism in his looks which seemed to forbid the observance of ordinary courtesy. "Where are you going, my Lord?" said he coldly, "I have taken leave of all my friends, and they have been allowed to depart."—"Certainly, sir; all got permission to go away, but receiving no special commands from your Majesty to resign my office, I hope to retain it until the duties can be transferred to other hands,—a change, however, of which I would rather say nothing at present. "Office and duties!" replied the Prince, with a sad and bitter smile. "I did not, at least from you, expect this mockery. Take not me for a mendicant of services which I can no longer



repay! I have neither armies to command nor treaties to negotiate. What employment remains for you? Dethroned and powerless, I desire still to uphold my dignity as a man, but to carry about the pageant of state were to bring down ridicule upon misery. Dara is now no more a monarch than yourself!" The other, both affected and surprised by this address, could only say, in doubt how to comport himself, "If our equality be greater, so ought our friendship." The King, on yielding up for ever his hopes of empire, appeared to be inspired with some of that enthusiasm which animates great minds frequently on a death-bed or the scaffold, when about to quit the world. "Our friendship, sir," rejoined he, "grew amidst a reciprocity of benefits, with which I am proud to think both were satisfied. That is ended and can never return. Dalbracken! I know you thoroughly, that spirit is proud as my own, disdainful of extrinsic claims to honour, aspiring and conscious of capacity to use dominion well. The path to power, magnificence, glory, is behind you, return and pursue it without a stain on your name!"—"But I am not to be considered the *mendicant* of fortune," cried Dalbracken, "turning my back on a charitable man when he has no more to give!"—"No!" continued Dara; "but we were not created to bear exile and privation together. It is not the cedar, but the humble creeper that entwines the Palm-tree, and still clasps the prostrate stem with its green tendrils when uprooted by the hurricane. One stately trunk does not embrace another. The same storm may overwhelm them, but they cannot be united in their fall! As you have heard flatterers say, the splendour of Darius was once mine. Here is the desolation in which he died. Future ages may call the wreck of my fortune grand, but yours is not the ambition to be a wretched weed growing on magnificent ruins!" Dalbracken now perceived that Dara, ever anxious to be esteemed for his character more than his birth, felt mortified when all the advantages of high station were gone, at appearing an object of compassion followed gratuitously by his most valued servant. Wages and kind treatment, still in his power to afford, seemed to him compensation for their attendance to the poor menials. But his haughty spirit, even in this abyss of misfortune, revolted at the thought of incurring an unpayable debt to one whose services could be remunerated by the high guerdons of ambition alone. The cant of humble fidelity, and disinterested devotion to the person of a King, so often uttered in pure servility, though applicable here in a nobler manner, would have been treated with scorn. "Since you renounce authority, reject my services, and also disown my friendship, I am entire master of my future conduct," said Dalbracken, with a lofty but yet respectful air. "My *pride*," continued he, "was formerly to deserve greatness and honourable fame; it is now to stand the consequences, when my efforts to attain them have failed. Seated on the throne of the

Moguls, Dara had not the right, nor could aught which he commanded have made me forfeit my own esteem. Neither shall he do so at this moment when divested of power. I will not, for him, commit the low-minded cowardice of abandoning a benefactor to the mercy of the desert to seek safety for myself, still less favour from a despised enemy. It is therefore my determination to follow these carriages, until I see their inmates lodged in security. Then, but not till then, shall I think of returning to the country of my birth, where the wealth showered upon me by the house of Timur, for your sake will elevate me above the condition in which I was born. "Dalbracken," cried Dara, in deep but concealed emotion, "I will not answer you; let us be friends, however, since we may not part," and in saying so he embraced him affectionately.

\* The behaviour of the country people had already begun to remind the unhappy family of its fallen state. The same men who were wont not many weeks before to use the name of the unfortunate Prince as a watchword of justice and protection which scared their oppressors, now refused a handful of flour or a drop of milk to his starving wife and child! The servants bearing that name on their badges, came round Dalbracken to complain of the insults and denials which they everywhere experienced. Seeing that the party depended on this neighbourhood, not merely for present refreshments, but for the supply of provisions with which it was to cross a tract entirely desolate, he proceeded immediately, attended by his troopers, to the villages. The insolence of the ungrateful peasants in rejecting his entreaties, telling him that Aurungzeb was emperor, and they his subjects, could only be exceeded by their tame submission when he drew his sword, the men following his example, and forcibly carried away whatever the exigency required. The few things which could be thus procured, however, were wretchedly insufficient for the dreary journey before them. The road to Persia presented itself as offering the speediest prospect of a resting-place to the Queen and her young son. But the high-minded Princess thought meanly of the reigning family of that country, who, ambitious of alliance with the house of Delhi, were indignant at repeated rejections. Advising her husband to go through Moulton, and join his firm adherent in Candahar: "For me," said she, "rather than seek hospitality which will expose a daughter of Timur to be forced into a haram of the race of Sefi, my own hand shall end your anxiety for Nadira, by consigning her to the grave." The King, indifferent himself, took this counsel. As the pursuing enemy would advance towards them at sunset, they hastened away into the pathless wild. Human beings, already bereaved of all that men worship on earth, nay, scoffed at by their former slaves, might seem steeled against future affliction. Yet as they plunged deeper and deeper into the desert, griefs awaited them that banished the trappings of

outward greatness even from the memory, and harrowed the inmost heart, which in this instance royalty had not made callous. The dearest friends of the imperial great, are seldom princes and nobles, but the humble attendants who have watched their persons with guardian care from earliest infancy. Those placed over Nadira's childhood by her mother, were now and alone by her side. The whole of Dara's personal servants belonged to him at the same early age, unless the son had in some instances succeeded the father. The old people so intimately associated with every tender, gay, or proud recollection, were the first to suffer. The excessive heat of the sun, reflected from sand which no unshod foot could tread, gradually destroyed the cattle, where they could no longer be replaced. One carriage after another was consequently abandoned. The most cruel necessity then demanded a selection of some, brought up in all the softness of luxury, to be left a prey to the merciless elements. The parching air, and the burning ground, soon conspired to arrest the steps of these faithful and devoted creatures. Scarcely an hour passed in which the dismal procession had not to stop, until the stiffened limbs and glazed eye of an attached follower permitted them decently to cover the corpse with loose sand. The scanty stock of provisions and water got exhausted. The great state elephant which had so often borne its master in pomp and in danger, sunk down and died. Still nature presented everywhere the uniform aspect of majestic sterility. The cloudless sky shewed only the tyrannizing sun, flaming over an interminable waste which rose in wide spread masses like drifted snow, or in ridges resembling the billowy surface of a sea agitated by deep swells. Without other guide than the stars, they reached a well, expecting to find water, but recent storms had filled it up with the moveable soil. The remnant, supporting loathed existence on the flesh and juices of dead cattle, so abhorred by all Indians, continued to struggle on. Dalbracken, sustained by the superior strength of a European frame, kept riding on one side of the carriages, whilst the King proceeded on the other, in quest of those springs which sometimes surprise travellers in the desert. Dara first descried a speck on the distant horizon, doubtful whether it was in the sky or on the earth. Animated by this faint hope of preservation to whatever now bound him to life, he approached the spot, and found what he desired. It was a small hill entirely of rock on which rain had lately fallen and collected within its cavities. The King, making a circuit slowly round the base, discovered some green weeds, and presently a little streamlet which nourished them issuing from a cleft, whence the sand soon absorbed the scanty current. The furnished and shrivelled spectres, as the people now seemed, hurried forward with all the expedition in their power. When the carriages arrived, the sun having sunk behind the rocky eminence, left the spring in shade. The

unhappy Dara, stretched on the bare ground, and pillowed by his arm, was already in a profound sleep. The poor horse lay beside him in the same death-like repose. The toil-worn men crowded to the water with reckless fury, and as few could drink at once, a brutal contest ensued, fatal to many, which the strongest at last gained. The first animal untied from the yokes, was seized by them like hounds in the same extremity of hunger, torn to pieces with their teeth, and devoured raw. Such is the fierce selfishness produced by extreme privation, that the Queen and her helpless women would have been left by their habitual attendants to perish of thirst in sight of the fountain. They were unable to move, and none offered to assist them. But when Dalbracken got to the water, he filled a goblet and went with it to Nadira. On withdrawing the rude curtain, he started, after all that had just met his eyes at the wreck made by famine and sorrow, of the once lovely features which she no longer sought to conceal from him. He bathed her forehead and wetted the bloodless and scaly lips, before dropping within them what might be safely drunk. The Princess falling back immediately, sunk into rest, scarcely distinguishable from the last sleep of mortals. Dalbracken, in a condition dreadfully exhausted, also managed to climb the little hill, whence he looked in vain for human habitations, or a vestige of living nature. On repeatedly gazing round, however, he perceived, or something deceived his sight, two horsemen, who must either be the advance of a party in search of them, or the scouts of a gang of robbers. From neither could there be any escape if they came up. Should the appearances prove phantoms, he saw that it mattered not, since none of his party having means to leave the place, death awaited all, whatever might occur. Perfectly resigned to his fate, the European sought the same couch, and oblivion of misery with his forlorn companions.

Morning brought an unexpected respite, to what appeared the last of their sufferings, and presented to the eyes of the unreflecting a scene that produced a paroxysm of unmixed joy. They were awakened by the noise of men striking tent-pins into the ground, kindling fires, and cooking all sorts of savoury provisions. Dalbracken, having just raised his head, thought himself in the midst of Aurungzeb's army, when a message from the Queen desired him to learn who had arrived, and where her husband was. Moving a few steps, he saw Dara in earnest conversation with a man of rank, who stood joining his hands in an attitude of humble respect. He presently got a full view of the stranger, who seemed—yet God forbid,—but he undoubtedly was Juan Khan of Moulton. Thus, in the space of one minute did his mind, in a state prepared for destruction, receive a sudden gleam of hope, and again relapse into the worst foreboding. When the Princess heard the name of the man who came to offer succour, she raised her emaciated arms and

uttered a convulsive shriek, which overpowered the remaining strength of a wasted frame. "Ah, my Dara!" cried she in a wail expressive of woe, that none can lessen: "thy doom is then to be betrayed to the assassinating hands of a brother by the vilest of felons! The God of mercy has ordained that Nadira shall not behold his degradation, nor survive the murder of her lord. Dalbracken, I have nothing now to ask on earth but from you. I shall soon be lifeless, as my lost friends who lie in the desert: will you convey my corpse to the tomb of my forefathers at Lahore? Aurungzeb himself will not deny a grave to the daughter of Purvez."

When every one had partaken of suitable refreshments, commodious carriages being ready, removed the King and his family to Juan Khan's own palace, which he caused purposely to be vacated for their reception. In a short time after her arrival, the Queen expired.

Few being susceptible of the attachment which united this unfortunate pair, the present desolation of the husband's spirit, indescribable to any in words, can only be conceived by those who have possessed and lost the purest happiness. Marriage, when hearts and minds consent, resembles two beautiful landscapes, thrown into one by the removal of the barriers, which, extending the range and prospect, doubles the enjoyment of both proprietors. Dara fondly hoped to find this cherished domain his own, when the empire of Delhi passed to Aurungzeb. Divested of royalty, he would still have shone in intellectual dignity, amidst bards and sages, in a fortress of Persia, or in a Tartar village. But an earthquake seemed now to engulf that fairy home of his soul, with all the fountain-springs that fostered his love of life, and he hung, like a denuded rock, over the abyss where it had been. The King, removing every attendant, remained long alone with the dead body. None desired to disturb that sanctuary of affliction. At last Dalbracken, compelled to enter, found the imperial turban and the splendid robes brought by Juan cast as baubles on the ground, and him, so lately the mightiest of sovereigns, wrapped in sackcloth, lying by the side of his wife, as if her partner in death. Being quite unheeded, he knelt beside Dara, and mentioned the Queen's last commands, and the necessity of his now obeying them. The final separation from her remains, thus suggested, suddenly tore away the veil of apathy that had covered his features, and they assumed that appearance of benumbed anguish, to which a spectator almost wishes madness to bring relief. Without speaking, the King went to a little distance, still looking at the corpse. His eyes followed it when borne away, manifesting emotion in no other manner, until the bearers reached the door. When the beloved form then vanished for ever, shuddering in every nerve, he struck his foot on the floor, and covering his sight with both hands, fell senseless on *his couch*.

Dalbracken, partly won by the unremitting and even delicate attention of Juan Khan to the ruined family, embraced him on taking his departure with the funeral procession. But after reaching Lahore, and performing the last duties to his Queen, now beyond calamity, he found himself a prisoner, and heard that her ill-fated husband had already entered on that degradation which she so fearfully predicted. The villain whom he twice rescued from an infamous death, ended the treacherous hospitality, by selling his benefactor, and proceeding to deliver him in captivity to Aurungzeb.

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## CHAPTER XLVII.

TURNING a while from the misfortunes of Dara, I have now to record some events which followed the downfall of his brother in Bengal. Aurungzeb, after his signal and decisive success in Ajmeer, despatched Meer Khan to complete the subjugation of Sultan Suja. With an army so superior in every other department, he opposed equal science to the formidable resistance of the Prince's artillery, and one by one laid his fortresses in ruins. The luxurious palaces, gardens of shade, roseate bowers, gelid fountains, and even their Houris inhabitants, were finally abandoned to the rapacious victor, whom contemporary chroniclers censure for dispossessing the ladies of immense wealth in jewels, on the plea that both they and their ornaments were public property. The second son of Shah Jehan, like his first-born, with a beloved wife and children, now fled beyond the immediate grasp of the usurper, through the pestilential wilderness and untravelled mountains which divided his province from what is now called the kingdom of Ava. Disease, hardship, and accidents, had reduced a retinue of fifteen hundred to about forty persons, who were chiefly Persian gentlemen, when Suja arrived at Arracan, the capital of a principality bearing the same name. He, with the Sultana, Peeari Bana, and her sons and daughters, were received at first in a becoming manner by the Raja of the country. This man was known to be a mercenary barbarian, ready to purchase the good-will of a powerful neighbour by any act of atrocity.

Meer Khan, thoroughly acquainted with his master's disposition, to make sure work, in ridding himself of enemies, was aware that all the competitors being in his power, the butcher-work would presently begin. This successful general and profound intriguer, though sufficiently unscrupulous in perpetrating wickedness which the world sanctions, besides having no liking to assassination for its own sake, resolved to incur neither the detestation of his employer, nor universal odium, by directing

the murder of a whole family of the imperial race. He accordingly adopted a scheme to obtain leave of absence, with the view of returning, to receive the reward of his services, after other hands should have wielded Aurungzeb's daggers, to the extermination of his brothers. He therefore pretended, that on beginning the last campaign, he made a vow to revisit Mecca, and thence to walk alone on his bare feet to the shrine of a certain saint, on the shore of the Mediterranean, where he had been miraculously inspired with the desire of proceeding to India, and assisting "that Prince, now victorious over Infidels." A petition was also presented by him, begging the restoration of his money taken from King Kootub, to hire a ship for the voyage.

The pious usurper, for some reason, highly approved of the pilgrimage, but instead of an order on the treasury, offered his renowned and honoured servant a vessel, in which he was requested to conduct a fleet bound from Surat to the inviolable city; and, what exalted him immensely in the eyes of the Faithful, he received a commission to act as the proxy of Aurungzeb, in performing the enjoined ceremonies at the Temple. Meer Khan, embarking on the Hoogly, a branch of the Ganges, in due time landed at Surat, and whilst the pilgrims were assembling, he did not fear to hold intimate, though rather private, intercourse with the family of Mr Guttlethorpe. The veneration of all its members was unbounded for a man to whom Steelbow and De Jungle were as nobody. Taking up the Chief's favourite quotations as his own, he spoke English, and professed to have discovered the middle course between Christian and Mussulman, European and Asiatic, so as to be either when he chose, in conformity with the institutions of the country in which he resided. Poor Guttlethorpe's brain spun round like a top lashed by a schoolboy, when so great a man praised the political system followed by him in the late convulsions.—"You, as the first civil authority," said he, "which is always superior to the military, may justly claim all the merit of the campaign in Guzerat, not less than the praise due to your diplomacy. It was, indeed, a master stroke of policy to save the Factory by negociation, whilst the army, organized and sent out by yourself, reduced a province larger than the whole kingdom of England! The loss of it to the Company afterwards, through the desertion of Dalbracken, who transferred it to Dara, cannot be imputed by any candid person to you. Were the circumstances substantiated as usual by official documents, laid before his Majesty, now so happily restored, he would doubtless consider your talents deserving of the highest reward." He likewise thought Jiger and Dressup neglected men, to whom their country owed some marks of distinction. His polished address and flattering attention raised high and tender hopes in the young lady, for whom, he affirmed, General Dalbracken could have obtained the entire province of Malwa, to be held

like her uncle's territory, as easily as Surajpore, had he been so inclined. That person's interest, however, could no longer avail her in retaining what she possessed ; but generously proffering his own influence at the reigning court, he talked magnificently of what might be done towards enlarging her dominions on his return from the West—provided that she contracted no injudicious alliance. Both parents, the Rance in particular, declared this to be just the man that they wanted for their daughter, and engaged that he should, along with his friend, Jeswunt Sing, dictate her choice. Eurasia having no reason to doubt his intentions to propose himself, in order to conclude the treaty formerly offered by Aurungzeb, consented as became a maiden Princess. Mr Guttlethorpe having prevailed on his two friends to furnish some additional despatches, bundled them up with De Jungle's letters from the different fields of battle, and presented them to this new patron of his house. Nothing was wanting but a memorandum to his London banker to defray the expenses attending the issuing of patents, and other items, little known to the vulgar. The Chief, however, saw into them at once, and gave Vulpine unlimited credit. Thus provided, away sailed the Hadji with his fleet of pilgrims. Having executed the commission of Aurungzeb in the most imposing and conspicuous manner, he parted with his Mussulman attendants, on pretence of setting out alone to the tomb of the auspicious Saint to whom India was indebted for his services. He took the shortest road through Egypt to Alexandria, where he immediately got a passage in an English ship, which bore him up the Thames in better plight than he had come down many years before. I cannot wait to notice the quarantine. Falling in with an old acquaintance, Mr Vulpine heard the worst accounts of his family in Scotland. His father, incurring the displeasure of the local authorities, had been mulcted so heavily that he resigned his lands to the oppressors, and died broken-hearted. A cousin, married to Clara, involved in the fate of his relative, left her an almost destitute widow. But the old Laird of Dalbracken having received a remittance of an hundred thousand English pounds from Malcolm, after redeeming his own lands, generously purchased Duncoyle, for the purpose of holding it in trust till the heir should return from abroad ; and in the meantime, knowing how agreeable it would be to his own son, he surrendered the mansion-house, with a suitable portion of the rents, to the daughter of his deceased friend, delicately stipulating for re-imbursement when Gilbert reclaimed his inheritance.

Gilbert, however, bent on projects of ambition, had no intention of disturbing the amicable arrangement, or even setting foot in his native country at present. The court of Charles the Second, now revelling in the extravagance of loose gaiety, was one in which he would have delighted to shine. The enormous wealth which they imagined him to possess, made the General



of the Great Mogul a welcome spectacle to needy courtiers and a needier King, whose revenues fell far short of supplying their pleasures. Many who had lost their fortunes, but retained their rank, interest, and appetite for the fashionable enjoyments, begged, borrowed, and promised in return whatever he wanted from the fountain of honour. Through their influence, Vulpine had a near prospect of being created Earl of Duncogle, when they told him that no obstacle remained but the determined hostility of one of the noble mistresses. This opposition seemed unaccountable, as the lady in question happened to be the only one of the sisterhood whom he had not seen. Nor, on his trying, would she receive his visits. He wrote a propitiatory letter. The answer, bearing a coronet on the seal, completed his astonishment. It was in French.

"Sir,—I am well acquainted with your unmanly disposition, and do not doubt that your intention is now to insult and disgrace me. But beware what you do. One disrespectful word spoken, or an insinuation in any form against my character, will bring down vengeance on your head. I have more than ever the means of retaliating an injury.

"DALLYMORE."

"P.S.—If you are wise, leave the court."

This portentous intimation from a person of the greatest influence, threatened Vulpine with disappointment of his title, and the loss of that harvest which he expected to reap from the gold sown among the courtiers. Still he hoped that Lady Dallymore, who seemed to avoid going where she might be seen by him, was in some mistake. He contrived to get to an entertainment at which she appeared. Surrounded by a brilliant circle of wits and buffoons, the lady perceived him before he recognised her. Affecting to ask his name,—“Heavens,” cried she, “is that your candidate for the peerage? I remember his being shewn to me as the man who used to sleep with Oliver Cromwell.” At that place and time, a jest destroyed the best character. Rochester made an epigram, which circulated through the room; Buckingham called the subject of it *Mrs Noll*; and Vulpine saw every one staring at him with derision on his lips. When at last his eyes lighted on the authoress of this mischief, he stood in dumb amazement to discover in Lady Dallymore, Adeline, once Countess of Boutade. He bowed, as the spectators concluded, in reproof of the affront which the royal mistress had put upon him, and all of them, to support her, laughed aloud. The story, the epigram, and the nick-name, under her ladyship’s patronage, extinguished Vulpine’s hopes for himself. Yet he succeeded, on making proper use of the Surat papers, as apologies for the venal intercessors, in getting a peerage to Mr Guttlethorpe, in extinction of all claims on those noble friends. For this dignity, thinking it but fair that the new Lord should pay, he drew on his banker for the amount. Being

thus enabled to be liberal beyond the standard price, inferior honours were at his disposal for any person not bearing his own unfortunate name, for which no gold could now obtain nobility.

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## CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE persons whom Aurungzeb chiefly consulted concerning the disposal of his relations, were the priests and bigots who formed a sort of ghostly council that he submitted all cases of conscience to. He now required their advice how to eradicate the affection of the common people for Dara, which, after all his triumphs, was still dreaded. They concurred with him in thinking that the popularity which alarmed them must have been purchased by the magnificence of the heir apparent; consequently, the best way to make him an object of aversion and contempt would be to parade him in a degraded state, the appearance of which was calculated at the same time to impress the spectators with an exalted opinion of the omnipotent conqueror. When his execution should thus be rendered safe, he was to die. The prisoners having reached the gardens of Shalimar, lately the scene of pomp and pleasure, orders were received to lodge them there during the night, whence they would enter the city next morning. Danistmund Khan producing authority to take charge of Dalbracken from the guard, conveyed him in a palanquin to his own house. Dara and his child, in dirty and ragged dresses such as the lowest menials wear, yet fettered with gold chains to denote their birth, were now placed upon a poor baggage elephant without any castle, and carried through the most frequented part of Delhi, which Europeans call Lahore Street. It has some resemblance to the Boulevards in Paris. Alli Murdan's canal then flowed in the middle, between two rows of trees, with a road on either side of them, extending in breadth to the houses. The whole space seemed a continuous pavement of living faces. The roofs, balconies, and windows, were also crowded with dumb and stupified spectators. Aurungzeb having stolen privately to an apartment over the gate, which commands a view of the place, watched the procession with trembling anxiety. The dead silence of a crowd so immense was itself appalling. At the lattice of one haram only the peculiar and pathetic wail of Eastern women broke the universal stillness. Where was that "voice of the people," which in happier lands can bring down an avalanche of retribution on the oppressor? The children of the East, rocked in the cradle of despotism, though formed to think and feel like

other men, are yet without that unanimity which constitutes the power of the many.

The eye of every slave now gazing on a King whom he emphatically called *the Just*, his protector, the most beloved and the noblest of Timur's progeny, had seen him there in the splendour of royalty and in the gaiety of youth. Not a word of complaint nor a moan of compassion escaped the lips of one man, on seeing him fallen and insulted, the victim of a worthless brother's tyranny. Aurungzeb, satisfied with his success among the populace, prepared for another exhibition before his nobles, to obliterate whatever respect they might entertain for the unfortunate Prince. Assembling them as at the morning levee, he took his seat under the canopy, and ordered the captives to be brought before him. When a man of rank is introduced, he makes two *tusteems* or obeisances in approaching, and a third in the presence, while a person appointed for the purpose, announces each time the performance of the ceremony and the style of the individual. Dara did not speak or bend, until he stood before the throne on which he had sat. When proclaimed in this place, the subject and suppliant of his brother, he suddenly raised his manacled arm and looked as he was wont on the chiefs that surrounded him. "Nobles," cried he, "I am Dara your King, the inferior of none but God and Shah Jehan!" These words overawed his hearers, who felt the inborn greatness of the man, majestic to the last, and instinctively stooping, most of them paid the honours due to his rank. All turned their looks on the captive, inwardly scorning the ignoble artifice of clothing him in mean apparel, which by irresistible association, recalled to mind the regal ornaments that of right belonged to his person. "Aurangzeb!" cried Dara, regarding him with the aspect of an offended master, "to avert further infamy from our family, it becomes you now, in presence of these nobles, to pronounce sentence of death on your King, to execute it instantly before the eyes of the world; and when the father is reduced to clay, spare his innocent children! Renounce the despicable design which I know lurks in your heart to remove us all by secret assassination!" Aurungzeb, whose appearance was never imposing, looked even contemptible on this occasion. Sitting with his feet under his hams, fingering a long string of beads, he dropped his jaw and turned up his eyes to avoid the scowling glance of Dara, till they found refuge under the lids. The nobility, as if abandoned by their sovereign to the mercy of his disowned but still royal brother, stood like statues gazing vacantly on the ground. The assembly was abruptly dismissed, and the prisoner ordered to be conveyed to Selimghur.

We have seen Aurungzeb borne to the height of power by availing himself, with extraordinary perseverance, of the tide of events which he did not create. He has now to make himself secure in this exalted station by rending the holiest

ties of nature, and planting the tree of dominion in the life-blood of his nearest kindred. No sense of pity, no horror of atrocious guilt, nor the fear of God, withheld him one moment from fratricide. But the mastery that Dara, in ruin, could still exercise over the spirits of men, in the very scene prepared by his enemies to degrade him for ever, threw the remorseless Prince into a state of painful indecision. Lying on a bed writhing in doubt what to do, and dreading a reverse when nearest the summit of fortune, he consulted public opinion after the fashion of despots, by questioning the spies who penetrated to the recesses of every family in Delhi. They told much of the tears secretly shed for the fallen King, the execrations against his betrayer, and the warm praise bestowed on the unflinching fidelity of Dalbracken. At night, when individuals could escape detection, voices were heard in every street threatening those who had acted conspicuously in dethroning "the Just Sultan." Aurungzeb was convinced that, if once roused and guided by any popular commander, the multitude, of whom every man bore arms, might rescue their favourite, and upset the present authority in the capital. He therefore wished to have him secretly put to death, and a report spread that Dara had escaped. Lest the deed should transpire if entrusted to other hands, he resolved to be the executioner himself, deliberately arranging in his mind to go in the dark, and after stabbing his brother, to inter him along with the grave-digger in the floor of the cell. When selecting daggers, and about to dress for this task, the Princess Roshenara demanded admittance. She brought accounts of an attack on Juan Khan's quarters, in which seven of his guards were killed. Though inveterately hostile to the King, she shuddered on hearing the necessity of destroying him ambiguously hinted, and pleaded strongly in favour of sending him to Gualior. In her opinion nothing need now be apprehended from Dara himself, but such a dangerous adherent of his, as Dalbracken, the most likely of all men to plan and head an insurrection, ought not to live an hour longer. She heard impatiently of Danistmund Khan's engagement to bring over his prisoner to the successful party, when the fate of his master should release him from allegiance. That learned and talented nobleman, entertaining great esteem for the European, had indeed made several attempts to convert him to his own trimming creed. But his arguments were refuted with haughty derision, and some severe remarks made by the captive on the apostasy of the noble philosopher, who had changed sides on the field of Summonghur. Danistmund then tried what fear could do, when his logic failed, inferring that, for his own security, the conqueror must cut off an enemy so powerful and inveterate; then drawing an epicurean picture of the blessings of existence, contrasted with the loathsome gloom of death, he conjured his friend to save himself by

forsaking a cause irretrievably lost.—“I love life,” said Dalbracken unmoved. “At my age, the mere sense of being is enjoyment, and I wish not to resign it: but to men of my country and education, the consciousness of merited infamy is more intolerable than the tread of your elephants, or the stab of an assassin.” This uncompromising tone, so implicative of his own conduct, being little to Danistmund’s satisfaction, he made no report of the conference. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, Roshenara now obtained belief when she declared Darr Beg Khan, from her own knowledge and experience, an obstinate opponent, whose hostility none could mitigate, nor was there any safety for the ruling party while he breathed. Arungzeb’s affection for a sister who served him zealously, could not hesitate to grant what he perceived to be required as a personal favour, in addition to anticipated public benefits. He accordingly wrote the death-warrant with his own hand, affixed his seal, and, in her presence, calling the executioner to the outside of the door, delivered the paper, with orders to strangle Dalbracken immediately.

The poor Georgian girl, hearing of the manner in which the man that she most respected, the only one remaining from whom she could expect freedom and happiness, was returning from Lahore, had resisted all entreaties to stay at Mandoo, and setting out, reached Delhi almost as soon as he. She was humanely received by the family who had charge of him. Between the haram, where she lodged apart from others at night, and the rooms assigned to Dalbracken, with whom she spent much of the day, there was a narrow passage, and on one side of it a staircase leading to the subterranean apartments. Coming through this place in her veil, the young lady saw five strange men intruding, regardless of the remonstrances of the servants, and in the features of the leader, recognised the messenger of death. With the instinct of the lapwing to preserve its young, she uncovered her face, unbound her long hair, and wringing her hands in the wildest attitude of distraction, spread her arms across the entrance to the souterrain.—“Kill me, kill me!” cried she, “but you shall not go to *him*!” One of the ruffians laid hold of an apparition more fair and beautiful than he had believed to exist, and the rest having no doubt of finding the object of her solicitude below, descended to do their office. She seemed to swoon, and was thrown on the floor, as the man who held her had to follow his associates, four of them being usually employed to secure the limbs of one condemned, while the executioner applies the rope and tightens it with an iron bar. No sooner did he get under ground than Mariam, starting up, shut the door behind him, and applying the chain and bolt with her own little hands, made the murderers her prisoners. Meanwhile Dalbracken was sitting safe in a room over their heads, as his amiable preserver well knew. Leaving him unconscious of what had passed, she ran to Danistmund Khan, at

that hour always in the haram, and fell at his feet, imploring him to intercede with Aurungzeb. The eloquence of passion, earnest, pure and unselfish, has great power over ingenuous minds. The favourite wife of the Mogul nobleman, on hearing an artless story of what she had done, took Mariam in her arms, caressing the young Georgian with fondness and admiration. Danistmund, to his honour, never disinclined, notwithstanding Dalbracken's uncomplimentary deportment, yielded to the unanimous solicitation of the women, and proceeded to the Prince's palace, before having received any regular intimation that the executioners were in his house. When told of the death-warrant by his master, who made some apology for omitting the courtesy of apprizing him that it was issued, he lamented the circumstance on his part, since nobody could find access to the state prisoner in his absence. He found Aurungzeb in that state of irresolution which generally preceded his discovery, in most cases by the light of another, of the policy that would best promote his interest. In reference to the present danger to their common cause, the philosopher observed, that popular feeling was transitory, though overwhelming for an instant, like the torrent formed in sudden falls of rain, which swells higher if stopped, and foams over any object cast in its way, but soon subsides of itself when left alone. To kill a man whilst enthusiastically applauded by the citizens, might drive them to fury, though, a few months afterwards, they would probably assist joyfully at his execution, or at any rate be quite indifferent to his fate. He therefore humbly conceived that the people should have time to forget their idols, before any further steps were taken. Were the king cut off amidst the admiration of the whole empire, the excited passions of millions might impel them to join one of the surviving competitors in quest of vengeance. Numbers would still make Suja formidable; but what he feared most was, lest hatred of Dara's destroyer should create a reaction of the army in favour of Morad, against which the walls of Gualior were but feeble barriers.

Aurungzeb felt great relief in perceiving that delay was advisable; and ordered the postponement of the murders until he could have them perpetrated in a manner agreeable to his conscience as well as policy. On afterwards learning how the assassins were treated, he caused Dalbracken to be removed out of the town to Selimghur, in a place so near the river that the sound of it was distinctly heard.

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## CHAPTER XLIX.

As Danistmund Khan foretold, Dara and his cause sunk gradually into apparent oblivion amongst a disunited people

oppressed with too many evils to feel long for any but themselves.

The time at length arrived when Aurungzeb perceived that his interest dictated a final settlement of public affairs by the destruction of his brothers. He affected, however, to proceed reluctantly to the dreadful work, and even subjected the unfortunate Princes to the solemn mockery of a trial before his spiritual conclave. The Koran being the fountain of all Mahomedan law, divines are always qualified to act as counsellors. Hence the high sanction which these persons could give to acts appearing heinous to the vulgar, which a man of peculiar piety must now do for the security of his power. "Ah! my friends," said Aurungzeb, "I feel my spirit too weak to proceed with that which the service of God requires of me. The hearts of men love Dara, as ye have seen. He must yet reign. Will ye not consent to strengthen my purpose to resign dominion to him, and retire, as I ever inwardly desired, to the inviolable city of Mecca?" They threw themselves on the ground, vowing never to lift their eyes again to the light, until their patron abjured an intention so pregnant with ruin to the true religion and the nobility of India. He condescendingly bade the wise men rise and give their opinions fearlessly. Ahmed Khan, his Persian doctor, now ennobled, spoke in the name of the rest. He charged Dara, in vehement style, with blasphemy, heresy, toleration of idolatry, and persecution of the righteous. Every word uttered by him was substantiated by a competent number of witnesses. The primate of Delhi attested the old story of an attempt to get him burnt, in irreverent competition with an infidel priest who pretended to the gift of working miracles. The book inculcating good-will to all men, established his guilt in tolerating the Hindoos. His blasphemy was proved by the audacious speech in the hall of audience, in which he did not acknowledge himself inferior to the angels. "Hear your servants, O mighty Prince, who shall be King of kings," concluded he, "the word of our prophet, and the glory of his creed demand that Dara must die!" Aurungzeb, who had been shedding those crocodile tears which came at will to his eyes, rose up with an air of indignation, dictated, and presently signed, the death-warrant of his elder brother. "The tenderness of my natural affection," said he, "would have forgiven the worst offences, had they injured me and mankind only, but it would be terrible impiety to pardon crimes against God!"

This trial was just ended, when the Syud Gazi-o-Deen entered, with what some reckoned supernatural opportuneness, and casting his turban at the Prince's feet, lay prostrate on the ground, claiming vengeance on the murderer of his father's son. The holy council were unanimous, that the prayer of the petitioner could not be refused: the Almighty not having conceded authority to the kings of the earth to shield the man, how great soever, who sheds the blood of the Prophet. The usurper, sobbing

anew, consigned Morad to the dagger of this poor instrument of natural revenge, and cold-blooded iniquity.

Suja being in a foreign state, a mock decree against him was not necessary to palliate the atrocity, since no doubt remained of the Raja of Arracan's readiness to act the hangman.

Having really little of the affection and admiration for Aurungzeb which guide the pens of some historians, I ought nevertheless to apologize for using impolite terms in describing his judicial procedure. The great Mogul, who made the Koran and its expounders tools of state, was no worse than the Tudors and Stuarts, who made English juries do the work of the assassin. An order to strangle and stab, under the Emperor of Delhi's hand and seal, or rather his signet, had all the formality and force of law in a country where the sovereign's will is virtually the entire code. The Ameer-ool-Omerah of Aurungzeb, about half a century afterwards, when going to suffer for executing one of his master's sentences, pleaded that as a loyal subject, he was bound to put his own brother to death if commanded to do so by the Emperor. This speech is worthy of your Dalzells and Claverhouses, who served tyranny in the name of religion at the same period. I will therefore allow all their admirers to read, for *murder* and *assassination*, "the sentences passed on the mal-content, Princes convicted of high treason." But however legally and justly condemned, these devoted individuals were resented by an event which brought consternation among the judges, even before the court rose. Dalbracken had escaped. The keeper, opening the door as usual to give the prisoner his morning-meal, found the cell empty; and scarcely a doubt remained, that the popular, unyielding General, would soon be once more at the head of his army in Malwa. Danist-mund Khan, no way responsible now, could only conjecture who rescued him, from the singular fact of Lady Mariam's having eloped on the preceding night from his house with a man of the Goojar tribe, noted for great excellence in the art of stealing. His wife knew rather more than he of this new exploit of the charming Iberian. The poor girl fell into the deepest despondency on being separated from her patron. Denied permission to see him, or even communicate with him on account of her successful stratagem against the executioners, she sought relief in her hopeless affliction, by talking of it to an old woman, who, half pedlar half beggar, perhaps on safe occasions given to small thefts, had long been allowed access to the children in Dara's family. "Luchmeenia," said Mariam, "do try to go to Selinghur, and ask the Viceroy, *'Is your health good? Is your heart not very sad? Petition for Mariam to prepare your food and cool your drink, it will make her happy.'*" Luchmeenia declined the task, as above her ability, but offered to make her son do much more, if a large sum of money were promised him. A diamond necklace, such as Goojar never filched, was held up as the price of Dalbracken's



liberty. The champion thus selected to aid distressed beauty, being descended from a long line of distinguished thieves, knew all the topography of Delhi exactly by land and water. The young lady, on hearing his plan of operations, had the sense of propriety to make a confident of the good-hearted matron with whom she lived, and receiving no serious discouragement from her, proceeded boldly under the Goojar's guidance. Dalbracken lay in an apartment about ten feet square on that side of Selimghur, close to a branch of the Jumna, which then separated it from the palace of Shah Jehan. The guard lying before the only entrance, well secured by a bolted door, confided the watch to one sentinel, who, agreeably to the rules and regulations of the Mogul army, should keep awake, though not required to pace backwards and forwards. The prisoner slept with his face towards the river, whence fresh air came scantily through a lattice work far above, and the foot of his bed nearly reached the wall in that direction. About midnight some motion in the ground woke him. He sat up, looking stedfastly at the spot from which an indistinct sound seemed to vibrate on his ears, yet the earthen cup containing oil and wicks that served as a lamp in one corner, revealed nothing to his eyes. Presently, however, part of the floor fell in, and he caught, with no agreeable sensation, the sparkle of a living creature's eye under the ground. Next issued a human hand, holding to his view a piece of paper, on which there appeared an attempt to trace Roman characters. Cautious of receiving this introduction, he stood aloof; yet knowing that a hostile messenger need hardly take that route, he shifted the light nearer, till it enabled him to recognise the pot hooks and Scots words which the little Georgian had learnt from Davy Kirkland. "Come awa," was the laconic admonition. On thus delivering his credentials, the Goojar crawled out of the tunnel which he had excavated beneath the foundation of the wall, and opened an easy communication with the stream. Naked, except at the loins that a rag covered, oiled from head to foot, and carrying the mining instrument, he moved in full armour as the accomplished night robber, prepared to baffle vigilance, or wriggling with the lubricity of an eel from the grasp of detection, which his weapon besides shone ready to detach. Without speaking, both crept out as he entered. Dalbracken being seated astride an inflated sheep skin, filled with air to make it float, the other gently pushing down his head near the surface of the water, kept hold of a string attached to the vehicle, and began to swim away, not making the least noise. The current, very rapid at the time, bore them along. On getting beyond the shadow of the fort, seen in the star light, "If they fire," whispered the conductor, "I shall duck your honour a breath or two to escape the balls." Dalbracken, dismounting from his bag, told him to proceed, and he would follow, swimming too. They most fortunately got unperceived to what is called the

"Island," where both divisions of the Jumna meet at its lower extremity. There Mariam, relieved from a long agony of suspense, received her lord with a transport of delight which made her faint. A skiff, a small fast-sailing boat, carried them beyond fear of pursuit long before day break. Her jewels, at the suggestion of Danistmund's lady, had further provided elephants and an escort, which now waiting their arrival in the Muttra forest, conveyed them, after some perilous adventures, safe past Aurungzeb's posts to Mandoo.

Those who would have historical characters to act romance, and romance subjected to fixed rules, will be shocked to find the Georgian lady not immediately rewarded like a heroine for her noble and devoted attachment. It sprung from gratitude and feeling of common interest, not passion. But fully conscious of her claims to what he had no power to give, Dalbracken made some compensation by allowing her a magnificent establishment. Kirkland, now elevated to the rank of colonel, in addition to the title of Bahadur, equivalent to Knight Banneret, had been, as stated, guardian and tutor to her whom the people began to call Vice-queen. I feel reluctant somehow, in adding what Dalbracken intimated on this occasion to his present friend and former domestic. "Davy," said he, "that most amiable girl has laid me under obligations which I can never discharge, for I cannot become her husband. I am married to another,—a fact which I beg you not to question me about, nor repeat to any person but her, on the same condition of being silent on the subject. She respects me, because I raised her from slavery to freedom and honour, and perhaps from considering her future well-being dependent on me. The partiality which she already has for you, puts it in your power to awaken a warmer and deeper feeling in her vacant heart. You have not only my permission, but earnest injunctions to make her and yourself happy. Marry the young lady, Davy, and her portion shall make your fortune."

The fears of Aurungzeb for an enemy whom he thought extremely formidable, induced him to open a negotiation, which, in the first instance, was broken off by the European's refusal to acknowledge any other authority than that of Shah Jehan. Whilst mustering an army, the usurper made application to Jehanara to use her influence in preserving peace. At her suggestion, Shahista Khan sent his son as an hostage into Malwa, whence Dalbracken, leaving him with De Sylva, went to Agra for the purpose of listening to terms of accommodation under the auspices of the Princess. These were soon adjusted. Too sadly aware of the utter abjection of Dara's fortune, the European general was scarcely surprised to find Jehanara speaking of him as already among the dead, and beginning to recover from sorrow for his fate. He accordingly took her advice in agreeing to make no useless attempt in favour of the captive king; but he would on no account

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acknowledge Aurungzeb as Vicegerent, and threatened to keep the whole revenue of his province, unless permitted to pay it half-yearly into the treasury of Shah Jehan. There being no intention to commit the imprudence of withholding a sufficient income from the aged Emperor, this mode of supplying him was like the other stipulations on the present occasion, consented to with suspicious facility. Dalbracken having no faith whatever in the promises of Aurungzeb, and determined never to serve him, had now resolved to proclaim himself an independent sovereign, and announce his marriage, on the death of Shah Jehan. His unabated and engrossing fondness for Jehanara alone inspired this daring ambition.

Her father no longer exercising nominal authority, the Princess now governed the deserted palace, unheeded and unenvied. The lovers, therefore, found no difficulty in meeting when they pleased. Their first interview passed in less tenderness than might be expected after a long separation, full of so many dreadful events. She had become jealous, almost to hatred, of poor Mariam, and he by no means thought her indirect acknowledgment of the present court of Delhi, worthy of the future Queen of Malwa. But the chafing of love, like the friction of amber, only makes it cling closer to the object of attachment; and, as happened in this case, the reconciliation which follows mutual explanation, enhances every endearment.

Agreeably to the arrangement now concluded, Dalbracken could, on pretence of business, demand an hostage, and visit Agra almost as often as he desired.

I shall not revert to his punctual payments of tribute, nor do I wish to say another word of his dalliance with the wedded but unavowed object of his adoration. A spirit, doomed to watch over the infancy of society and of manhood, I cease my functions when they grow enlightened enough to direct themselves. Hence the wise suggestion of James the Sixth, adopted by the *Radical* parliament of his son, establishing parish schools, set me and my order at liberty to wander: and on the same principle, I had resigned my influence over Malcolm Dalbracken, long before he thought of the Mogul Princess. Unequal matches have not my approbation. The dregs composed of ignorant Plebeians, and the scum, consisting of the privileged Great, occupying respectively the bottom and the top of society, make but a foul mixture with the intermediate matter that has undergone defecation. The prince and the beggar are joining links in the chain which forms the social circle. Of what the nobles of a country ought to be, my conception is strongly tinctured with the opinions of the good and unhappy Dara. But in speaking of men as they are, I take the liberty of characterising each class by the attributes of the majority. As in all nations, the same virtues and vices are found in all ranks, but in very different proportions; a truth which some-

times enables the advocates of a vicious people to maintain plausible falsehoods.

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## CHAPTER L.

DURING one of his prolonged visitations at Agra, Dalbracken received a file of London newspapers from one of the English factors then resident there, in which, to his unspeakable amazement, the whole of De Jungle's military despatches, and the following announcement of honours, appeared:—" *Whitehall, June 25, 1665.*—"The King has been pleased to confer the dignity of a Baron of the Kingdom of England, on Jehoshaphat Guttlethorpe, Esquire, with remainder to the husband of his daughter Eruasia, and her heirs-male by him lawfully begotten, by the style and title of Baron Surajpore of Surajpore, in the East Indies, and of Safebury-in-the-Middle, in the County of Kent." Then succeeded with similar preamble,—"The dignity of a Knight-Baronet of Ulster, to Patrick Jiger, Esquire, of Surat, in the East Indies, and the heirs-male of his body lawfully begotten."—"The King has been pleased to nominate and appoint Lieutenant-Colonel Simon Dressup, in the service of the East India Company, to be a Knight Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath."

There may appear nothing uncommon in one set of men reaping what another had sown. But a very extraordinary plot was now forming, to put the laurels of the conqueror on the very head of his vanquished antagonist, and to transfer the province which he at present held, to the sway of his early friend and constant opponent. Vulpine, returning as he went, was again at Surat; and having reported his arrival, requested his great master to fulfil the conditions of the treaty proposed long before, and to which Jeswunt Sing assented in regular form, previously to the attack on Dara's camp in Ajmeer. Aurungzeb, in fact, destined him to dispossess the present incumbent, from the instant of his forcible resumption of authority in Malwa, and now suggested the plan of operations against the unconscious Dalbracken. His frequent absence, from leaving all departments exposed to the tyranny of Steelbow, and the proceedings of the military legislator and renegade, gave great offence to the officers. Vulpine, or as he once more styled himself, Meer Khan, informing himself fully, took advantage of this disaffection, and made proposals to the army to support him, which some Europeans accepted secretly, without hesitation. The majority, however, held back, chiefly because the legislator had opened a correspondence with the intriguer, in order to secure his own dignity and immunities, in which they expected him to be suc-

cessful. The candidate for dominion, however, soon perceiving how he could best turn the obnoxious functionary to account, gave a solemn promise to the aggrieved, that he should be tried by a court-martial, on such charges as they chose to prefer against him. The terrified Solon of Malwa, on getting this intelligence, ran no one knew whither, until a moving petition to spare his property was received from him, dated on board of a ship. Steelbow, heroic and renowned in the field of battle, proved a very indifferent ruler in time of peace. His mind being purely military, could see no limits to the authority of a Commander-in-Chief, and consequently treated the slightest remonstrance against unjustifiable acts as mutiny. Assisted by his late law-giver, who inspired him with a love of legislation, he had issued solemn orders about the collars to be worn by the dogs of officers "in camp or cantonments," and on the shoeing of chargers. This interference was only laughed at. But the General must turn moralist, and suppressor of vice too. The grave edicts circulated in the Orderly Book, for regulating concubinage and unlawful love, will not bear transcription. The paternal care of their commander for young men's morals, which imposed celibacy on lieutenants and ensigns, was not appreciated with filial reverence. Patroles, going the rounds at night, invaded the bed-rooms of the youths, to enforce due respect to orders; and occasional reprimands and trials ensued for disobedience. Dalbracken's friends, and indeed, every person of respectability, ceased to hold private intercourse with the irrational despot, and made Kirkland write over and over again to Agra, complaining to the Viceroy, and apprising him of impending danger; but Aurungzeb and Jeswunt having emissaries on the watch, intercepted the letters. Steelbow was destined to end his official career on Christmas day. Intending to give a magnificent entertainment, he invited all the gentlemen at the place; but they declined his invitation. He then commanded their attendance in a military order. They came, seated themselves when desired, and stared in silence without tasting a morsel. This event not having been foreseen, the host, in a woeful tone, begged them, alas, in vain! to behave like Christians and Englishmen, and to peg away, for God's sake, at what they would find a d——d good dinner. The host seeing himself made game of, swallowed nearly a quart of brandy to drown the sense of his disgrace. Perceiving their Commander-in-Chief to nod and snore, the party broke up, and left him to dream of his folly and the limits of military power. On the morning after this mortifying occurrence, Steelbow, to hide his shame, left the camp in which he had been playing at soldiers, and rode off with his usual escort to visit the town of Rutlam, near the Chittore frontier, where he expected, on good grounds, to find more agreeable company to console him in affliction. Pitching his tents close to the walls, the persons in authority

hastened out to pay their respects to the illustrious Fowlad Khan. When these formalities were over, he unlaced his garments, and lay down to repose coolly and luxuriously on a mat furnished with pillows. But he was soon most agreeably disturbed, by the approach of several gay processions, consisting of young ladies of the Eastern Opera, marching in companies, led by venerable matrons, and followed by the gentlemen of their bands. The sound of their bracelets and anklets, and the waving of their snow-white robes, breathing musk and perfumes, intoxicated the hero's senses, even before the *cheekes*, or net-like screens, arose at his command to bid them enter. They poured upon him with laughter-loving faces, and soft-saluting voices, like Houris, welcoming the pious Moslem to Paradise. Some of the damsels preparing to dance and sing, the rest squatted down beside the great patron of the sisterhood, on learning that he was fatigued, to administer their restorative by manipulating his wearied limbs. With retracted lips, and elongated mouth, disclosing all the formidable teeth, under his lowering moustaches, the old soldier lay like a tame lion playing with his cubs. One girl, to whom he paid rather particular attention, pawing his ill-combed hair and grisly beard, wondered that so exalted a personage should not smell sweeter. One so entirely delighted with the whole sex, could refuse the best of them nothing: accordingly, she received full powers to make her admirer agreeable, and proceeded to do it by anointing him all over with sandal oil. Steelbow, imperfectly acquainted with the intensity of this perfume, liked a name often occurring in the native songs, and prizing the delicate hand that applied it, he kept urging her to rub on plenty, and d—n the expense. How fleeting are the joys of man! Whilst lapt in the most refined pleasure which his heart knew, the lord of the jocund scene was prevented from hearing a tumult outside, by the music, until a matchlock—another—and a third went off. "Hillo! orderly, bid those fools limber up, and squib no more here!" The firing increased, the General cursed in English, yet it ceased not. The tramp of cavalry surrounding the tent—the rattling of armour—a crowd darkening the door, astound him in quick succession. Sabres are cutting the ropes on the east side, the poles creak, swerving to the west. Screams, yells, execrations, arise, as the stately pavilion falls to the ground, involving beauty, valour, harmony, in the chaos of its dark collapse. Now the numerous party of red-turbaned Rajpoots descend on their prey, like some wary fisherman detaching a pike from his imprisoning meshes. When daylight was restored to the recesses of the tent, there lay, in indignant rose, Fowlad Khan, the Chief of the Torn Beaver, the handcuffed and guarded captive of Jeswunt Sing, Shah Rana, King of the Hindoos.

When intelligence of this capture reached Mandoo, the gar-

rison rose on General de Sylva, peremptorily requiring him to proclaim the accession of Meer Khan to the Viceroyalty, or to resign his command. Honest Michael sturdily answered, "No," to both demands; and as the Pretorian legion still adhered to its chief, he put himself at its head and marched off, escorting Lady Mariam and the young Prince of Chittore, under the immediate superintendence of Colonel Kirkland, towards Agra.

Meer Khan, speedily informed of the revolution, and of the Maharana's activity in securing the dreaded Steelbow, lost no time in following up his advantage. As Mr Vulpine, he was privately married to Eurasia, only daughter of the Right Honourable Lord Surajpore, in the morning, and as Meer Khan, he received an express before the evening, which made his instantaneous departure imperatively necessary. De Jungle, I lament to record, deluded at first by the deceitful promise of soon having the honour to kiss the hand of his Princess, which he took to imply matrimonial possession of it, received the supplanter of his old friend in the territory of Surajpore, and adhered to him with the Betulian legion, thinking the new ruler then triumphant.

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## CHAPTER LI.

BUT whilst these events were in progress, a series of deeds had begun elsewhere, from which the heart of common wickedness revolts.

The Raja of Arracan, apprised of Aurungzeb's wishes, proceeded to destroy Suja and his family. But the engaging manners which never forsook this accomplished Prince, had already endeared him so much to the Chiefs and people of the country, that a pretence was requisite for the cruel and infamous violation of hospitality which he was doomed to experience. The Raja being a Budist, not a Braminical Hindoo, began his operations by demanding one of the Mogul Princesses in marriage for his son, an intentional insult that drew forth the disdainful reply anticipated. He next affected to discover a plot, devised by the strangers, to dethrone him and make the Sultan king of the miserable swamps that constituted his dominions. Suja, foreseeing in what these absurd accusations would end, removed his tents to a narrow valley defended by an unfordable river on one side, and a precipitous rock on the other. It could be entered only at the opposite ends, between the water and the precipice, where two men might walk abreast. Here, when about to be attacked, the royal voluptuary assembled his forty companions, and addressed them with not merely perfect serenity, but with as much as was becoming of his habitual gaiety.—"My friends," said he,

"we have been often defeated of late, but my success is certain to-day. I fight no longer for empire, or even victory, but for death, to preserve honour, which my sons and I will presently maintain to the last, by dying sword in hand. These savages are the instruments of him who thirsts for kindred blood only. Has any of you a single tie binding him to existence, or a hope of enjoyment left? Let him grant me a last favour by surrendering instantly!" They all, to a man, drew their sabres, and ranged themselves by his side, without making other reply. They formed back to back, preparing to sell their lives at a terrible price, as the enemy, whom tradition rates at two hundred, rushed through the passes and assailed them. The desperate Persians, hewing down the foremost ranks, would have exterminated the whole, had not a remnant fled and left them brandishing their reeking weapons over a field won in vain. Reinforcements of thousands arrived, but they shrunk in dismay from advancing against the energetic fierceness of men conscious of their destiny, and resolved to die. The appalled barbarians ascended the rocks, and took to boats, whence shot and arrows began to pour upon the devoted band. But why recite abhorred details of fiendish cruelty? Suja and every man with him perished! The Sultana and her daughters, lifted from the mangled corpses of those most dear, were dragged to the Haram of the Raja, where she, as well as the elder Princess, in Eastern phrase, opened for themselves the gates of the tomb. The unhappy child remaining, being forcibly married to the son of her family's murderer, expired broken hearted in degradation and misery.

Morad, with all his own and Dara's male children, had long been consigned to the fort of Gualior, where the tyrant condemned them to take daily draughts of poppy-water, a slow poison, which, enfeebling the intellect, gradually brings on idiocy and bodily weakness, ending in death. All that was beautiful in the person, and firey in the mind of the once joyous Morad, now disappeared from the world, as he slept in his dungeon under the mean hands of Gasi-o-Deen.

Shah Jehan, worn out with years and infirmities, began to sink rapidly under the horrid calamities of his children. Jehanara, expecting soon to lose the parent whom her affection had so long cherished, on learning that Dara still lived, earnestly entreated Dalbracken to proceed to Delhi and accept the investiture of his province from Aurungzeb as Vicegerent, a step which she, on the authority of her sister, believed would save the deposed king's life, and she hoped that the proposed submission would also enable her to obtain his removal to Agra. Though extremely reluctant to undertake any business requiring the acknowledgment of the usurper, he could not possibly refuse to sacrifice his inclination to the preservation of Dara's existence. He set off, accordingly, in total ignorance of the state of Malwa, commissioned to impart the wishes of the Princess. The ruler of the empire received him with proper distinction, promised everything at the first interview, and did nothing. The Viceroy,



leaving the presence, was proceeding through the long arcade between the imperial residence and the principal entrance to the palace, when he got intimation that the gates were shut, and an official appeared to conduct him to apartments in which the prince commanded the Nabob Darr Beg Khan to reside for the present. There he continued, in reality a prisoner, for six weeks, but most respectfully treated, and supplied regularly with dishes from Aurungzeb's own kitchen. The aged Emperor expired about the time of Dalbracken's arrival at the court of his son, an important event, of which information was carefully kept from him. The increasing bustle, however, and unceasing concourse of people to the city, indicated some great affair in progress. At last his Highness invited the Viceroy to a private conference, at which he assured him not only of forgiveness, but of the sincere esteem with which his fidelity had inspired the successful competitor for empire; and after reiterating his promise to grant Jehanara's request, he conferred the dress of honour solicited by her as Dalbracken's investiture. Whilst they sat together, five men abruptly entering the room, out of breath, stood still staring at the visitor. The foremost of them, with looks like what Italian painters give Judas Iscariot, carried something under a white sheet on which a single small spot of blood appeared. Aurungzeb, rising up, retired with these people into another apartment without dismissing Dalbracken, who remained inwardly shuddering and fixed to the spot. The doors closed around him, and he could not obtain egress, though numerous attendants shewed him a bed-room, and supplied everything needful. The Prince did not re-appear. Early next morning a mace-bearer coming to enquire for Dalbracken's health, in the name of their master, desired him to dress and take his place in the hall of audience at the levee hour. He went accordingly, and found all the nobles of India crowding the space allotted to their order, and a countless multitude of inferior rank standing in the court. Presently Aurungzeb arriving, mounted his father's throne, and was proclaimed Emperor of the Moguls, by the name of Allumgeer, or *Conqueror of the World!* The same ceremonies then took place, feelingly remembered by the European, which followed the inauguration of Dara. Dalbracken, obliged to approach the new Emperor and present the offering of homage in his turn, could only venture to enter a protest in a respectful tone, which most of the hearers thought a profession of fealty:—"Sir," said he, "believe me no traitor!" Conducted back to his first lodgings, he received permission, along with other nobles, to depart a few days afterwards. This favour was announced to him by Danistmund Khan, with whom he had not previously conversed since his imprisonment began.—"You say nothing of the King," observed the Viceroy of Malwa; "what am I to tell the Princess respecting her brother?" The other looked solemnly, yet inquisitively, at the enquirer, as if doubting the necessity of the question, but did not answer.—"Why this mystery, my lord; is our once revered master to wear out his wretched being in the dungeon

of Selimghur?"—"Dara is dead!" replied Danistmund, "I, and every soul in Delhi, believed that you came here approving of his death—you certainly went to keep Aurungzeb company when he was waiting for the return of the executioners with his brother's head; you are said to have been present when they arrived, and to have assisted in recognising the features of the deceased after the blood and dust were washed off. Did you not continue the whole of the subsequent night in consultation with the present Emperor? What other motive had you for remaining so entirely in the palace, but, like Juan Khan, to avoid the fury of the citizens?" The horror and indignation which this recital produced on Dalbracken may be imagined, but cannot be described. The murder of Dara, though long anticipated, threw him into all the bitterness of grief. The only consolation which he was susceptible of at present was afforded by Danistmund Khan, who, implicitly believing him, listened patiently to an explanation of the perfidious system of deception and misrepresentation that had been employed to take away his honourable fame, with a view undoubtedly of destroying his influence as the head of the late King's party. The night before his journey began did not pass in sleep. Whenever he resigned his faculties to repose, that single spot of blood on the sheet carried by the assassin appeared to his imagination. It spread out in rays of red light, then glared upon his eyes like the sun in the banner of the Moguls, and he started from his bed. One of a superstitious turn would have seen something supernatural in this vision, but he knew it to proceed from the excited state of his mind.

Issuing at dawn from the Derio Gunge, or water gate of the city, he entered the vale of the Jumna. Neither the fresh breeze, now charged with the fragrance of mustard flowers in full bloom, nor the desert looking plain beyond the river, studded with villages embowered in their clusters of evergreen trees, awakened the wonted sensation of pleasure in his troubled spirit. With gloomy thoughts brooding on war, and the punishment of criminals defying human justice, he rode on so hurriedly, yet irregularly, that his retinue thought him distracted. On coming in sight of the tomb of Hamo-yan, he sat calmly on his saddle, seemingly observing the rising sun illuminating its massy dome, under which the body of the murdered Dara was interred.

The kettle drums, preceding some great man, now sounded at hand among the ruins of the ancient city, and a messenger giving his master's magnificent title, "The Lord of Lords, Governor of Moultan," presented his compliments to the Nabob Darr Beg Khan, with a proposal that, agreeably to the Emperor Allumgeer's commands, they should travel together to Agra. Dalbracken excused himself, on the plea of not being well enough to enjoy company, and kept moving forward. But the nobleman whom he knew not, at least by his present designation, dismounting from his elephant, and now advancing towards him, he could not without marked discourtesy, refuse to meet a Viceroy like himself half way.—"Who is

this?" cried Dalbracken, "does the traitor, the miscreant, Juan Khan, dare to appear in the presence of the Chief of Dara's nobles, on the threshold of his tomb? Go, Caitiff! Pitans, are you not ashamed to dog the heels of one so black with infamy, whom our deceased Queen truly called, as I do now, the vilest of felons!" At the utterance of these last words, the reviled betrayer's horse was made to plunge suddenly forward, and a dagger grazed the side of Dalbracken, who escaped by giving his charger the spur and drawing his sword, as Juan unsheathed his to strike a more effective blow. They wheeled about and closed, but in a moment the Pitan rolled to the earth with his neck laid open under the corner of the jaw, weltering in the deluge of life-blood that gushed from his dark and savage heart. A mob that had followed from the town intending to stone him, came up in time to witness, with delight, horrible to refined man, the last agonies of a villain suffering retribution.

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## CHAPTER LII.

DALBRACKEN now hastened to Agra in the full determination of carrying the Princess immediately to his capital, and declaring himself sovereign of Malwa. After waiting most impatiently a long time, he obtained an interview with the lady, in which circumstances transpired that were said, on intelligible grounds, though erroneously, to have deranged his understanding.

"My Lord, you are welcome," said she, entering: "I have learnt from my sister, who was lately here, the hardships suffered by you at Delhi, and regret them extremely. Your many noble services to the state, and not least the slaying of the infamous betrayer, Juan Khan, merits a reward which the present Emperor will be forward to acknowledge."—"All hail, royal Lady! but where is my Queen of Malwa?" cried he, uncertain whether she were in jest or earnest. "My lord," replied her Highness, "I am constrained to bid you remember your place, since I have resumed mine. Our intimacy must cease: but your high public character has induced me to see you now for the last time, in order to learn how I may promote your interest, and what I shall solicit for you at court."—"Jehenara!"—"Sir?"—"Tell me, for heaven's sake, what all this means!"—"Do you not know," rejoined she, "of his Majesty's having offered me a revenue, with every distinction becoming my rank?"—"Who?—What?"—"He has done so in the kindest manner, and in consequence I leave this place presently, to take up my residence in the family of that affectionate brother."—"Aurangzeb?" asked he, bewildered. "Now," continued she, "my influence will be considerable, and if well assured of your fidelity, I will venture to promise you the richest province in the

Emperor's gift."—"Forgive me, madam," answered he composedly: "I mistook your Highness for Jehanara, the sister of Dara, but these words undeceive your servant, who, not acknowledging the murderer as the successor of that King, will receive no favours from him."—"Oh, speak not so to me! what shall I do?"—"If the appeal be to me," said he, "do that which you have sworn to a thousand times: disown, defy Aurungzeb's power, and come with me to Mandoo!"—"Alas, how can the daughter of Shah Jehan abandon her station to embrace shame and ruin, as the wife of a meritorious peasant?"—"Perhaps, Madam, the barbarous eminence of your dignity sees all inferior gradations on a level. I, however, am not a peasant: and if your father wore a crown, so might your husband."—"How," cried she, "can such sophistry change the state of things? My lord, we never were equal, and you do not imagine my weakness could make us so."—"It made you my wife."—"Wife!" said she, smiling loftily. "Nothing but an infatuation, in which I no doubt participated, could lead one of your wisdom to believe any marriage capable of binding a Mussulman Prince to an infidel." He paused in real astonishment that the invalidity of such an engagement should be pleaded by her: for, in point of law, she was perfectly right, though soldiers and courtiers had never objected to his religion, nor generally known which he professed. "Then," observed he, "your Highness condescended to be my mistress?"—"No," replied the unblushing Princess, "you are mistaken; the children of Kings may have paramours but not protectors."—"Ha! it is horribly true—more deceived than by the usurper, I have been the dupe of an abandoned woman, who avows herself the abettor of fratricide, insulting the ashes of the noblest of men, of a brother who loved her most tenderly, to lick the reeking hands of his murderer."—"Allah! God is great!" cried Jehanara, doffing her state, "stay that tongue of burning iron, it sears my soul—oh, do not say that I desert my heart's brother, or insult his ashes! Nay, do not reproach me with the voice that has breathed so much fondness to my ear—speak softly to me, and let us part in friendship."—"Friendship!" retorted he scornfully, "*The children of Kings may have paramours, but not protectors*, nor friends either, like me, I presume."—"Ah! pardon what I spoke in anger at your severity," said she, beseechingly; "it was unjust and ungracious in me to impute dishonour to a man who poured the wealth of Malwa into my lap, when neither a dis-crowned father nor I possessed aught besides."—"I wish to hear nothing of that," rejoined he. "You know, Dalbracken," resumed the Princess, "that I confide more in your honour than in the fear of God over a believer. Have I forgotten our vows of wedlock and the text of the Koran that sanctified them, written with my own hand and bearing my signet, which you wear at this moment in your bosom like a *tabeez* or sacred charm? Here is the one given by you in exchange. What better attests my opinion of your worth than the knowledge that you could, but would not, use that fatal

document to disgrace a woman once beloved." He took the chain and thin gold box from his neck. "Wishing to deserve that character," said he, "I beg you not to trust me any longer. But why, why have you so foully deceived me?" While answering him, she received what he offered, and put unperceived on his hand a carcanet of diamonds of immense value. "Now," replied she, "keep in your reasoning mood, and I will convince you that we cannot remain united without bringing immediate destruction on both."—"Proceed," cried he; "in Aurungzeb's vein, I hear the prompter."—"Hear me, Dalbracken, and be just!"—"I will."—"Allumgeer (the sovereign title of Aurungzeb) having won the throne of the Moguls, is sole master of the empire, at peace with all the world, and possessed of armies and treasure to subdue the greatest monarchy in existence. Could anything less deplorable than madness incite a man hitherto wise and prudent, to contemplate successful rebellion against so potent a sovereign, with a handful of foreigners in a single province, the natives of which are ready to rise upon them when promised assistance? Why lose your merited renown and incur derision, by an impotent effort to gain a kingdom? Without a kingdom, a Princess were an intolerable burden, insuring, from her incensed relatives, persecution or death to you, as well as everything painful and degrading to herself. Dalbracken, do let me still be your friend! Promise, merely promise, to serve the reigning Emperor, and Malwa is your better bride while I live."—"My vision has disappeared. In defence of past folly, Madam, I shall only remind you that Aurungzeb crept by fraud and cunning to power, like a snake into a bed by virtue of its slime: and having neither the capacity nor the energy of a great mind, he can only maintain dominion as he gained it. I know not why fortune should continue to favour one of such slender pretensions. For you, and your sake, I could once have looked to the swords of my countrymen, and confident from past success, wherever I held the Chief command, expected an Eastern crown. But I thank your strength of ratiocination for unveiling my delusion, and lowering a vain ambition from the throne of Malwa to the happier hearth of my fathers, to which I shall soon hasten. The lady Jehanara, tearing herself from the core of my bosom, stands before me unsexed, and a far fitter ruler of empires than her pious brother."—"Feeling the splendid gift hanging on his wrist, he restored it, and making a parting salutation, turned about to go away—"Ah me! not thus," cried the lady. "Dalbracken, shall the shade of Dara see us part for ever and in enmity?"—"I mean not to harm you in word or deed."—"But wherefore, vexed and angry, do you spurn my good offices, nay, cast away whatever may bid me live in your remembrance?"—"Because the thought of you must hereafter make me appear contemptible to myself."—"Think after all how little offence, and how many days of delight I have given you!"—"Princess, touch *not that cord*; it vibrates cruelly!"—"Alas, how differently we feel!

What you and I have been to one another will remain a green vale in my memory, unblighted by the desert winds of the world, until the angel of death arrive. Can you forget our many interviews of exquisite and mutual happiness?"—"I remember the fountain sparkling in seeming purity, which, when drunk, blasted the source of life and joy with poison!"—"Have I then given and received, sacrificed and suffered, all that a princely woman could, to earn nothing but reproach from you?"—"I know not, perhaps, what you mean: but surely, Jehanara—*Princess*, I would say—I never subjected you to pain or privation, nor was it of you, but of myself, that I meant to speak harshly."—"Have not I, a daughter of the house of Delhi, resigned myself to your arms, a prize which the proudest king of Asia would bend, joining his hands, to possess?"—"You did," said he, ironically, "to be tortured no doubt!"—"More than you seem aware of."—"How! how tortured?"—"Immature fruit is not shaken with impunity from the bough of the young tree!" This plea of merit, couched in an apophthegm too easily intelligible in the East, extinguished the last embers of affection in the lover's breast. Tossing away the present which he had again received unawares, and clasping his hands, he started back, exclaiming, "Eternal God! what do I hear? my unborn infants destroyed by their mother!"—"Again in excitement against me! By heaven, your injustice makes me indignant, and I will not be condemned according to your foreign notions, without reminding you of the truth. Let the offspring of philosophers adopt speculative morals: let the princes of your far off land, who must bend to the multitude, act on lowly men's opinion of right and wrong! We, the royal born of inherited empire, giving laws to mankind, and answerable to the Almighty alone, know that the womb of a daughter of Timur was not made to bear plebeians!" Dalbracken, regarding her steadfastly with an air of abstraction, said, as if thinking aloud, "No, this is not the woman who has lain in my bosom."—"Alas!" continued she, "have I said too much? Chief of nobles, the proudest of your predecessors, approving every part of my conduct, had they been in your place, would have felt exalted by less favour from me than you despise."—"Tell the Princess Royal I once loved her, and can yet say farewell." With these words he was about to depart, when she intercepted him in an imploring attitude. "Oh, say you love me still! My heart falls from its royalty when this man frowns, and for him I become the weakest of women—Dalbracken!" Here the Princess shed tears, and stood waiting his parting caress. The mind of him thus conjured, had sought relief from its agony in a sort of reverie, out of which he was roused by the tones of impassioned grief in which she pronounced his name. Shrinking from her outstretched arms, he answered with stern solemnity in the language of his troubled imagination,—"It was hidden in the deep darkness of your eyes, but now I see all. It is crime that makes even an angel of light become a demon in the eyes of the heavenly host. I look on no delusion, therefore, but on frightful reality, when treachery and murder

make my once beautiful and beloved Jehanara appear to me a loathsome fiend—avaunt!" On hearing these harrowing words, the unhappy lady, disappointed of the support which she expected on the neck that had so often sustained her, staggered to one side, and clasping a marble pillar under one of the arches upholding the roof, pressed her head against it and remained bereaved of speech. Dalbracken now perfectly collected, but offering no assistance, bade her adieu, in the dictates of the heart she had palsied and doomed to feel no tender emotion for her or others again. "Princess, I wished not to give pain that cannot do good. I will on no account seek to injure you hereafter. My lips have uttered your name for the last time: and the voice which has just spoken unbearable truth to you, unheard by another, shall never more reach your ear. Farewell!"

I have thus brought myself, most unwillingly, at last to discharge the duty of an impartial historian, by revealing those dark passages in the private life of Jehanara. She has been throughout, I dare not say why, a favourite of mine: and, besides reluctance to disclose her crimes, I was desirous to let Western readers see her only as Dalbracken did, equally deceived, with the same facts before them, instead of judging from the issue to sneer at him. There are some sojourners in the East, who would have nothing to learn after the first interview of the lovers. But the greater part of them, however wise in their own conceit, remain just as ignorant about the interior economy of Oriental palaces, as their home-bred kindred.

The honest Bernier, whose curiosity, unblunted by familiarity and long residence, penetrated deeper than most subsequent travellers, yet he, without even knowing the name of the Princess, has done her more harm than I: not by making her twenty years older than she really was, but by repeating the scandal of the rival faction which he found afloat long after the political contentions ceased. Among others, he relates a sad calumny which originated in an indecent experiment of old Shah Jehan, to ascertain how far the union of Mosque and State would carry loyal divines. With this view, in reference to his attachment to Jehanara, he propounded a grave question which the reverend Doctors answered in parable: "He who hath planted the tree is certainly entitled to banquet on its earliest fruit." The waggish monarch, now in his dotage, perceived not the edge of his satire, which they, at whom he aimed the point, turned against himself, and were joined by the enemies of his favourite daughter, to the lasting defamation of the purest filial affection, which ending only with his life, soothed the ills of a father's declining years when dethroned, heart-broken, and imprisoned.

Dalbracken could not regard the most appalling part of Jehanara's conduct to him with Asiatic eyes. The practice of concealing, I might almost say preventing, pregnancy, by causing early abortion, is so common in the East, that few women in the position of this Princess would reckon it a grave offence. It is one of the baleful plants that spring up in the poisonous soil of

society, wherever attempts are made to coerce nature. Partial success inevitably leads to vile reaction. Polygamy is not the cause of it, but a remedy vainly resorted to for the evil. If the chances of legal and desirable marriage are so restricted by custom or law as to exclude the hope of it, whether in India or Europe, illicit connections are formed, of which the evidences must be suppressed. Hence the antenatal destruction of infants. Good and evil co-exist in all characters. The children of the East have the light and shade, not distributed to relieve one another, but appearing side by side in all the ruggedness of abrupt contrast. Benevolence and cruelty, tenderness and atrocity, all realities, not counterfeits, teem frequently from the same breast. It was so with Jehanara. She never intended to unite herself honourably to Dalbracken. But loving him, and seeing that scruples on his part which the most illustrious of her father's courtiers would not have known, kept him aloof, she removed them by the profanation of religion to indulge her passion. The illusion, to one of his youth and temperament, was too delightful and flattering not to be complete. Having too much feminine sensibility, however, for the part she acted, the Princess was in great danger of becoming what she pretended to be.

A man of energetic mind, who can meet a woman's fondness with reciprocal warmth, is generally sure to gain the ascendancy. Dalbracken could make the haughty scion of Emperors "glow, weep, and tremble." Hence the struggle in her bosom between natural passion for him, and the prejudice of royal birth, that terminated in her acceptance of a once detested brother's protection. She went to his Court and was there treated with due consideration during the rest of her life. Her tomb is still to be seen at Delhi, bearing this simple inscription:—"Jehanara, daughter of Kings, sleeps here without any coverlid but the grass."

Aurangzeb maintained for fifty years the high place which he rose to, as we have seen, mainly by stratagem and treachery. Without other evidence of his merit than the fact that he seized and held dominion in spite of competitors, historians, like the vulgar, blindly worshipping success on a regal scale, have ascribed to him a greatness above mortality, which suffering mankind, in their malign idolatry, have ever been ready to accord equally to the vilest or the noblest who triumph by brute force. Aurangzeb really had not one ingredient of intellectual or moral grandeur in his composition. Whatever the Alexanders and the Cæsars might appear, were the mist of martial superstition which shrouds them once blown away, he was no demigod on earth. If a characteristic appellation should be wanted, I would call him the Python of creeping things among conquerors and rulers. With few faculties superior to those of ordinary persons, this Prince possessed cunning and industry, each in a transcendent degree. These chiefly raised and sustained him in his career. Our history has shewn by what plots and expedients, without plan, the Viceroy of the Deccan worked his way to empire. The glory



awarded him must be for the result of the contest with his brothers, since neither the laurel nor the olive flourished afterwards round the throne of the fratricide. Aurungzeb disastrously failed both of conciliating the good will and repressing the hostility of his subjects. Under the impulse of restless bigotry, he goaded nine-tenths of his people into revolt, by imposing a capitation tax on all Hindoos, destroying their temples, breaking the rude figures of their gods, and subjecting them to every imaginable insult and exclusion on account of their religion : while he treated Mahommedan schismatics with similar intolerance.

Hence India, under this monarch, falling from the palmy state which Shah Jehan had brought it to, was convulsed and impoverished by incessant civil wars during the long reign of the son who deposed him.

Aurungzeb, who had neither forbearance to avoid, nor ability to terminate strife, laid the foundation of that anarchy which lasted even to the modern day of British ascendancy. One remarkable feature in the character of this celebrated personage was universal distrust of his fellow creatures. The ladder by which he professed to ascend, the kindred spirits, fanatics and firebrands of the Mosque, who so potently aided his rebellion, were ungratefully cast down as soon as he got up, lest they might teach his sons to do unto him as he had done to his parent. Fearing to entrust delegated power to any one, and setting spies over every man capable of serving or injuring him, the Emperor impotently attempted to transact the whole business of government in person. Besides incessant labour in the details of affairs of state, he practised the penance of living by the sweat of his brow : eating no food and wearing no clothes but what could be paid for from the money which he earned by copying Korans and making caps.

Collections of a few of the many thousand despatches, orders, and private letters which he wrote with his own hand, in prosecution of these undertakings, display the extraordinary mind of the man. Amidst the drudgery of a clerk, mistaken for statesmanship, he cracks jokes abundantly, and seems to have encouraged answers in kind. He quotes poetry also in profusion : and seasons official instructions with texts of Moslem scripture, as if in rival imitation of Oliver Cromwell, between whom and Aurungzeb a parallel, striking in several points, might be drawn.

The saintly usurper of India, unskilled in the august quackery by which the deployment of armies is made to appear the sole cause of the submission of enemies and nations ; nor confiding much in the slippery chances of battle, relied most on corruption and cajolery for overcoming the generals opposed to him. His incapacity of comprehensive measures, and ignorance of enlightened finance, often transpire in the correspondence. In camp, at the head of a sufficient force to strike a blow which might relieve him from embarrassing difficulties, he is continually complaining of an empty treasury, or the want of means to gain over an antagonist : Yet the only scheme which he can devise for obtaining supplies, is to issue circulars so-

lemnly enjoining his viceroys to look out for hoarded wealth, and carefully serve him heir to every rich man, woman, and child, who shall depart this life. Without the least objection to shed any quantity of blood if it promoted his interest, Aurungzeb was far from being instinctively cruel, and he perhaps never put an individual to death from passion alone. Bland and courteous in his address and intercourse, he would have gained the affection of multitudes, had they believed him sincere: but his smiles, as one who knew him said, were considered like the lures of the two-headed snake, which is supposed to entice birds within its folds preparatory to strangling and swallowing them. He died unloving and unloved, friendless and miserable, under the pressure of calamities which he had brought on his country, and vivid consciousness of the crimes that he committed against his kindred in early life.

They were mistaken who pronounced Aurungzeb a hypocrite. Religion had full dominion over his mind in everything compatible with the paramounty of his worldly ambition. His piety was real, though it did not keep him from wickedness. If one end of the balance appeared depressed by sin, Aurungzeb, like many living zealots, made all right, in his devout imagination, by throwing prayers and humiliation into the opposite scale. Persecution and pillage of heretics were the principal other acts by which he sought to propitiate Heaven. Neither the Prophet's injunctions nor dread of perdition, however, could move the "dervise," beyond these economical forms of Mussulman devotion. Early aware of the influence of money, he took to parsimony and rapacity, and continued to practice them to the last, as expedients for obtaining power in its most condensed and portable shape. It would be difficult to find a single mosque, or endowment of any kind, which the Mahommedan religion gained from Aurungzeb, the most bigotted, orthodox, and admired of the Moguls, during the half century he reigned over India.

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## CHAPTER LIII.

GENERAL DE SYLVA, suspecting the Commander-in-Chief to have suffered the fate of his King, had been threatening for some time past, unless he was sent back, to hang Shahista Khan's son, who remained with him as a hostage. The alarmed father, calling on Dalbracken after his last interview with the Princess, to expedite his departure, gave the astonished Viceroy the first intelligence which he received of the revolution in Malwa, and of Meer Khan's recent arrival in its capital. He set out instantly to the camp of the Pretorian Legion, the only part of the army now acknowledging his authority. Hearing that Steelbow, having refused to join the Maharana's new ally,

was treated with great severity in his confinement, he next invited Jeswunt Sing to a conference on that and other subjects, and marched to the Chittore frontier. As he had both the heir and the miraculous talisman of the Rajpoot Prince in pawn, there occurred little difficulty in subjecting him to convenient conditions for their redemption. These were: the release of the prisoner, with compensation for his sufferings, which both parties agreed to make the new Viceroy defray; the exchange of the territory of Surajpore for certain lands of equal extent, forming a maritime district of Guzerat, which had been restored to Jeswunt in conformity with a secret understanding in the treaty of Oudypore; and, finally, the Rana's assistance in compelling Meer Khan to indemnify Dalbracken's friends for their losses in adhering to him. The stipulation in favour of Eurasia had become necessary on account of her extraordinary marriage, which, as now explained by her uncle, enabled Meer Khan to make it the germ of a future kingdom to himself, who, intending to be nothing more than a nominal husband, would deprive the young lady entirely of the benefits accruing from the cession of the principality. Jeswunt, anxiously wishing to have it back, and caring little for distant property on the coast after he had got it, eagerly acceded to the proposal of an arrangement so beneficial to the Europeans concerned.—“But,” said the Rana, “Meer Khan wont consent until you defeat him once or twice. I cannot appear so openly against him, being his friend at present. However, I will keep the army from molesting you while you attack him at Mandoo yonder, where he is still feasting with an escort, which your excellent luck will soon overcome; and when you master his person, expect me in a breath to help in settling these affairs.” Jeswunt accordingly departed to throw his force unsuspectedly between the troops of the new Viceroy and the capital, and Steelbow arrived from his prison. With hair, nails, and beard in all the luxuriance of four months' growth, clothes hanging in tatters, and nowhere concealing the skin, which water had not touched during that period, the gallant soldier could scarcely be recognised by his old friends. Launching out in vituperation of the monsters who inflicted imprisonment and starvation on as good a man as they, he detailed his misfortunes. Dalbracken, sympathising as long as he could, became tired of the ludicrous complaints against cooks and provisioners when so much disinclined to mirth, and stopped the narrator.—“I really lament your sufferings,” said he; “but, my dear fellow, amidst all that misery and ill-usage, how came you to have the means or the wish to perfume yourself so strongly?”—“Hum,” answered Steelbow, looking rather comical, “I happened to have some sandal oil upon me when I was taken.” And then he added briskly, “Do you know, had it not been for this capital stuff, the infernal swarms of red ants, white ants, and fifty thousand

insects besides, would have eaten my flesh as well as my clothes."—"Troth, General," said Kirkland, "it is a great pleasure to us all to see you alive again; but you are really wonderfully fortunate in escaping whiles with a whole skin in very queer ways."—"Ha! ha!" cried Steelbow, distorting his thin chops into ghastly laughter, "you are thinking of the Europe ham at Summonghur; but I say, Davy, my good Colonel, has the steward got anything cold? I should like devilish well to have a mess of Christian food before we go farther." The Major-General's potent jaws, with the digestive power of at least one horse, soon repaired the dilapidation of his constitution.

Dalbracken, declaring his determination never to shed another drop of blood aggressively, had recourse to a stratagem for the accomplishment of his last measures, which he would have despised at the beginning of his military career. Meer Khan, to ingratiate himself with the influential men of the province, remained behind the army, giving and receiving splendid entertainments. Those worshippers of the rising sun followed him, as a mark of respect, beyond the deep and rugged valley which intervenes, to a villa belonging to the deposed Viceroy, on the table-land of Malwa, where the present ruler was now giving his farewell feast. Dalbracken, perfectly acquainted with the localities, selecting an hundred cavalry, and accompanied by Steelbow and Kirkland, proceeded, as if riding a steeple race, direct to the spot, while De Sylva brought up the rest of the legion. They arrived, just after dark, among the tents of the guests, as their lordships began to assemble with all their equipages at the house. Making some troopers go before him to beat a kettle-drum and bawl out titles, the assailants passed for part of the expected company, and getting inside of the fortified enclosure without suspicion, they disarmed the astonished guards, shut the gate, then dismounting, ascended the ramparts, and took complete possession of the place. Meer Khan having heard, not many hours before, of his rival's being engaged in a negotiation with Jeswunt Sing, and apprehending nothing so little as his approach, no surprise was ever more effectual. The three Europeans mounted the terrace with drawn swords. When his men, going outside of the rows of pillars which separated the centre from the side rooms of the great hall, had surrounded the party, Dalbracken stepped into the middle of the circle where all the lights shining full upon him, revealed to the terrified gentlemen the person of their forsaken Viceroy, calling out authoritatively—"Fear nothing, but let the Nabob Meer Khan immediately surrender himself!" Wonder at this sudden irruption had not subsided, when the spectators, ten times more amazed, beheld the far-famed and inveterate rivals fall into one another's arms, and begin a long and earnest conversation in some foreign tongue. The recollections of infancy, of home,

and the quiet scenes of early youth which they shared together, contrasted with the tumultuous career run by them in the service of two princes contending for the empire of the country in which they now met so strangely, produced their natural influence on the sensitive mind of Dalbracken. Vulpine, not destined at any time to forget the present in dreams of the past, artfully awakened one train of ideas after another to throw Dalbracken off his guard. He spoke of Clara; and addressing a servant in a careless tone, in the Talinga language, desired him to muster the guards scattered and sleeping outside. He gave particulars of Maude Dalbracken's early death, and ordered a person to ride express and bring the militia (*Sabundees*) of Mandoo to rescue him. He affected extreme regret for not having known his oldest and best friend during these civil wars; while with equal insincerity, that over-shot its mark, he talked of this expedition to seize his person as a friendly visit.—“My dear Malcolm,” said he, “your attendants must be much fatigued; suppose you allow them to take some refreshment, and when I shall have dismissed my guests, let us enjoy a few hours’ chat alone. Is it agreed?” concluded he, laying his hands with brotherly affection on Dalbracken’s shoulders.—“Call me a sea-cook if it is, General Pin!” roared Steelbow, pulling in the first messenger by the beard. “You shant come the old soldier over me this time. I remember the *Salvo*, and the way your son of — of a friend caught me at Rutlam too; but this job wont do. I heard your hint in the outlandish lingo—a wink is as good as a nod to a blind horse; and so Beardy here, rather than have his throat cut, has kindly told me his errand.”—“General Steelbow,” said Vulpine, smiling composedly, “England never bred a braver man; but as an indifferent linguist, it is not wonderful that you misunderstood my servant.”—“Master Gilbert,” cried Davy, introducing the other messenger with a rope about his neck, “I have known you, man and boy, for a gentleman many a day, but here is a terrible rogue, and doubtless a liar, who cares likewise more for his neck than his master’s good name.”—“Ha, Davy!” replied he, “old neighbour, how are you?” shaking him by the hand.—“Malcolm, you have no objection, I suppose? That person was going to bring over the *Subundees* to keep order, in case our followers should squabble.”—“Thank you,” answered Dalbracken coldly, recovering his wits; “General de Sylva will presently arrive, long before they could, to save them and you that trouble.”—“Well, my good fellow,” said he, laughing, “it will be all one a hundred years hence. So, since you wont be my guest, I will be yours; and, forgetting all past differences, let us spend an agreeable night at a true European supper.—My lords, take leave!” The visitors departed; and the proposal of supping in harmony, being warmly seconded by General Steelbow, the captive Chief really made himself one of

the most agreeable men in the world to his captors. Seeing that no shift, artifice, or stratagem, could avail him, he submitted with good grace to the terms demanded by Dalbracken for the peaceful relinquishment of the province.

Jeswunt, faithful for once to his promise, arrived next morning to ratify by oaths, and approve whatever Vulpine had signed. At his earnest intreaty, the curse dooming his soul to inhabit a dunghill fowl was formally taken off. A detachment of bankers, with the public treasurer at their head, soon furnished the full amount of the ransom or compensation, whichever may suit the taste of those concerned.

Colonel Kirkland, who had the rare felicity of seducing a beautiful girl to virtuous happiness, received an ample fortune as his share of the present booty. To the surprise of his friends, Davy purchased a landed estate, and afterwards settled with his interesting bride in England. "It is very well for you," said he to Dalbracken, whose relations are all gentle folks, to go back to Scotland; but although, thanks to you, I have got plenty of gentility to keep me above water in the South, it would never do yonder, where every creature of the name of Kirkland, and as many on my mother's side, would call me cousin. Good faith, I should be like a pair of blown bladders that can make one schoolboy swim, but when a dozen more lay hold they sink it, and all of them go to the bottom." He behaved most generously, however, to all who had claims upon his bounty. Mariam, nobly born and educated in a royal palace, fully alive to his good sense and good nature, estimated her husband by his intrinsic worth, perceiving only that he was to her a foreigner, and never missed the artificial stamp of high life on his manners, or revolted at what she did not know to be vestiges of an humble origin. They lived happy in themselves and respected by the world.

Steelbow led a very different life in retirement. He laid out most of his immense fortune in purchasing a magnificent country residence, with hunting seats in all the principal sporting counties of England. His hounds, hawks, and unbounded hospitality, attracted abundance of such company as he could relish. His associates were the idle and dissolute men of rank, at a very dissolute period. Though ladies of the same condition did not frequent his table, the captive of Rutlam did not become a misogynist, nor encourage abhorrence of the sex in his friends. He appears to have been at one time in the habit of asking his guests very plain questions when they were about to retire, in order to adapt his accommodations to the peculiarity of every one's taste. But the curate of the parish being generally there while the eating and drinking continued, suggested an improvement, which required each gentleman to give a parting toast that the intelligent domestics might understand. The

merit of introducing this more than oriental system into the West, is doubtless due to the distinguished General, but, like other acts of that great man, it has of late been unskilfully imitated by one who pretends to be the discoverer. His most sacred Majesty, Charles the Second, visited this establishment on two occasions, when it was honoured with the royal approbation in highly flattering terms. Yet notwithstanding the satisfaction of the King and his regard for a fellow fugitive of former days, Steelbow would have died untitled had not the University of Oxford, with a liberality still characteristic of that venerable seminary, conferred on him the degree of LL.D. by diploma. This fact sufficiently explains the ridiculous tradition still current, that the conqueror of Caliwass and the Salvo was compelled in his old age to practice as an apothecary. It is true that great people, civil or military, cannot afford time to distinguish between prescribers and compounders of drugs, merchants and pedlars, lawyers and pettifoggers. But it behoves the precise historian to record that Steelbow, not knowing of any other than the medical doctorate, believed himself authorized by his parchment to act as a physician. When pressed by his clerical friend to have the document examined, he scornfully declined to be so ill bred as look a gift horse in the mouth, observing, "I know very well what a doctor should be, ay, and a parson too," pointing to two beautiful twin pillars on his grounds, designed by an eminent architect, to the memory of Cambridge and Bethel. He certainly delighted to steal occasionally from his fine company, to talk with travellers and country people in the village inn, where he felt pulses and ordered regimen with that exemplary gravity which becomes one of the learned faculty earning a fee; and without taking any, extraordinary as it may seem, he performed many miraculous cures.

Steelbow ended all his foibles by a premature death, leaving much of that unhappy progeny to whom the law allows no father. The unprincipled mothers having, by taking advantage of his ignorance of business, got assignments of the property in the names of their children, abandoned them to beggary, left his grave without a stone, and dissipated his ample possessions faster than the living warrior, in winning them, had scattered his enemies.

Nothing in modern times exceeds the complacency with which the gentlemen of Surat bore their dignities. Every one seemed fully conscious of the merit which had earned them. Lord Surajpore, overjoyed at having a principality "within hail of the Company's ships," built a castle in the principal town which was called by his title. Removing thither with the Ranee, now disqualified by peerage for the chiefship, he spent the rest of his days there. Eurasia, sobered by years, but still beautiful, on seeing Dalbracken, apologized for seeming ingrati-

tude, and thanked him in the most affecting manner for his "princely generosity." The widowhood imposed upon her by a living husband, at first occasioned deep affliction to all the family. But the arrival of a governor at Bombay, with lawyers and divines, enabled them to ascertain the invalidity of the marriage, which therefore needed not to stand in the way of any favoured lover's hopes. His constant attention and long habit having now rendered Sir Patrick Jiger noway repulsive in the absence of one more agreeable, he was accepted by the lady, provided her noble father would consent to the match. His lordship had no objection to an esteemed friend as his son-in-law, but sensibly enough, unwilling either to incur the resentment of Vulpine or the ribaldry of the world, he enjoined the *middle course*, which, in this instance, permitted a private union of the loving pair, who were not to promulgate it until Meer Khan fell into disgrace or left India.

De Jungle, sadly penitent of his desertion, soon left Malwa to reside at Surat. Being very opulent, though less so than his old comrades, Lady Ludgate succeeded in making an impression on Jack of the Jungle's heart, which accomplished her long-baffled scheme of getting a second husband, and he, in his own words, "got Europe wife." Both were pleased; what couple can say more? Mike of the Wood became a great and prosperous landholder near the scenes of his youth. Never discovering the ridicule and baseness attaching to his original occupation, the retired General used to welcome the young dandies of those days from Surat, when they came to beg his assistance in cutting cloth after the newest fashion for coats and inexpressibles. General de Sylva, grasping the shears to the last, was never better pleased than when shaping patterns for the apparel of his acquaintances.

Bahadur Ally, a signal instance of a man who was eminently qualified for one employment, and unfit for any other, did not flourish under the new rule of his country. After having got rich by selling intelligence, he was civilly requested by his former pupil to retire, on the discovery of his communications to the conspirators at Delhi. Hearing of Dara's capture and Dalbracken's imprisonment, the watchful Moonshee thought the time had arrived for making his fortune, by disclosing the life and conversation of the fallen European functionary. His offer came too late, and brought nothing in the market. The information which he volunteered, implying that he had himself lived among Christians, the zealots of Soonee purity made him conciliate the faithful by disbursing a handsome sum out of his ill-gotten wealth. Hoarding the remainder, and dressing shabbily, to avert the suspicion of inquisitors, he erected a poor looking platform before his door, and passed the rest of his in-



dolent and insignificant life gazing from it at objects in the street, with the pipe called a Callyoon in his hand, the smoke of which had become his only comfort and consolation.

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## CHAPTER LIV.

MALCOLM DALBRACKEN, arriving in his native country after a stormy and eventful life, enjoyed the heartfelt delight of being welcomed under the paternal roof by his venerable parents. The old laird retaining with his patriarchal despotism all the simplicity and benevolence of a good man unacquainted with the world, exulted extravagantly in the success of those early exhortations and seasoning of the mind, to which his son's triumphs were confidently ascribed. The worthy father, now more eager to marry his son than ever he had been to exclude matrimony from his thoughts, never doubting of his consent, died before he could fix on the best alliance among those that offered with the great families of Scotland. Lady Dalbracken, sinking under the weight of happy years, soon after resigned her breath in Malcolm's arms. Agreeably to an article of the compulsory treaty with Gilbert Vulpine, by which he obtained his release, a large annuity was paid by him to his sister Clara. Done by the admirer of her youth, in a manner which gave the transaction the appearance of a gift from her brother, she did not know the real nature of it till after the death of both: when, succeeding very unexpectedly to a high title, she declined it for the humbler, but more respected style of "Lady Dalbracken," in remembrance of her revered friend.

Malcolm, after his return, never would see Clara. Moved by some intuition of fancy, he felt assured that the sight of her in maturity or age, would for ever dispel the cherished vision of her early youth, which had haunted his day-dreams in so many camps and deserts. Shaking from his memory the brighter forms of those who pledged him with the cup of passion without purer affection than its ebriety produced, he clung with superstitious fondness to the unalloyed love of his boyhood, and warded off with pious care whatever threatened to remove the object of it from the shrine of his inmost being.

In him religion was a sentiment of the heart, prompting to acts of good will and beneficence as the worship most acceptable to his Creator. Having seen the vilest wickedness perpetrated by men who neglected no ceremony of their faith, he retained little respect for professions or outward observances. However censurable mistrust of them would be in general, it was natural to Dal-

bracken. At home, to his suffering experience, Christian Puritans had brought to the block a monarch whose person hereditary feelings taught him to hold sacred. Abroad, Mahomedan zealots hurled to the grave a Prince to whom he was bound by the strongest ties of personal attachment. A Cromwell, he feared, still presided in the conventicle, and an Aurungzeb in the State-Church. Affairs in Scotland did not belie his unanalyzed impressions.

It was solely to seek the means of protecting himself and his dependents from that civil and religious tyranny under which his country then groaned, which induced Dalbracken to visit London in the reign of Charles the Second. He went to offer openly a large sum of money to the King for a charter constituting his lands a regality, in which, possessing the common feudal authority, he should be exempted from the jurisdiction of subordinate functionaries, and responsible to none but the sovereign in person. But he proved a bad courtier. Though the superficial reader of his life may reckon him no rigid moralist, it would be difficult to describe the loathing contempt in which he held the principal persons whom it was necessary to conciliate in approaching the throne. "I will not dance attendance," said he, "on these strumpets wearing ducal coronets, which at once outrage decency, and make nobility a laughing-stock. Can I honestly call that accomplished libertine, and his notorious paramour, by a softer term than miscreants? Not content with bringing dishonour and ribald derision on a feeble-bodied nobleman, they must gain further applause from a depraved court by provoking him to fight an unequal duel, during which she held his horse, while the glorying adulterer, without incurring danger, stabbed the injured husband to the heart, and hastened to bed with the wife in his bloody shirt! Tell me not that these gross and complicated crimes are disapproved, when the infant offspring of them is made a peer! There, again, are two noble families of cousins, one of them bearing to my horror a Scottish name. The right honourable brother panders his equally honourable sister, his father and mother's daughter, to 'ogling royalty.' Another, the confidential friend of her lord, sleeps, and boasts of sleeping, with his first cousin! A third, I understand, means to descend to posterity as the chronicler of the infamy of his relatives and associates, in a volume or two of prurient French! My maxim has always been, *let every man make himself happy, but do no harm to others*. These, however, are not venial transgressions or common immoralities; they are acts which degrade human almost to bestial nature!" Such sentiments being then reckoned puritanical, were no less hateful to loyal ears at Saint James's in those days, than "philosophy" is at present in the Tuilleries. But she, who erewhile led his whole soul captive with her dark fascinations, now frequently condescending to visit him after essaying long and eagerly to melt

anew the hardened lava, the Lady Dallymore, finding her charms, though still unwithered, unable to extract any of his Indian wealth, generously proffered her interest with a more tractable lover, her present royal protector. Her ladyship knew exactly the terms on which any amount of "honour" was obtainable, but there being no established channel or office for negotiating a grant of feudal power, she had to consult one called by her the "Carrotty Duke," who in a neighbourly way, offered to smuggle the desiderated rights into a patent of nobility, on terms which the fair Countess said were understood between them, though not expressed. "Adeline," said Dalbracken, "I am ready to purchase peace and forbearance at any price, so here is the sum which you say entitles me to the largest draught from the fountain of honour; and pray take a trifle in addition to get my name kept out of the Gazette. This memorandum shews what I desire on account of another, who, knowing less, may care more about such dignities; but I have unalterable reasons for resolving to assume no titles myself."

The Parliament of his country having, very opportunely for him, made the restored King absolute, he returned to Scotland with the charter of sovereignty in his pocket. By virtue of the authority thus conferred, he prohibited armed men, under any pretence whatever, from entering his domain. Hence the military persecutors were excluded, and the harmless people, however fanatical, allowed to exercise their favourite form of worship, when they pleased to lay down the sword of Gideon. An hundred times have their fervent devotions arisen under the branches of this ancient tree. But the persecuted were not altogether grateful for the protection thus afforded them. They first styled Malcolm Dalbracken, *The Eerie Laird*, by which appellation alone he has been known in later times. They thought him no Christian, because he did not attend their meetings; and further distorting incorrect accounts of his real adventures, the same persons believed him to be tormented by an evil conscience, for rapine and murder committed in India, particularly on the three hundred and sixty-five women whom he was said to have seduced. Even the old servants who accompanied their master to Europe, were taken for ghosts and devils haunting this chief of sinners. The rich and poor vulgar, to this day, suppose every spirit voluntarily immured in solitude, devoted either to heaven or hell exclusively. Even moral sages have alleged, that he can scarcely be a good man who hates society. Yet the Eerie Laird was neither unhappy nor misanthropical, though he found no company which gave him pleasure. I have given the cause of his dislike to the court in his own words. Could an educated traveller, who passed his youth in scenes so fraught with excitement as the Mogul civil wars, relish the conversation of the country gentlemen, his *father's* compeers, whose knowledge, feelings, and locomotion,

had been almost bounded by the horizon of the spot which gave them birth? *British Indians* did not then exist to form, as now, a community by themselves, well bred and intelligent, more generalized in mind, free from faction, bigotry, petty nationality, than perhaps any other class in the empire.

Dalbracken's only companion, after his final retirement to the castle, was Mr Wylie, now a licensed clergyman, the instructor of his early days, who being qualified to act as a physician also, interdicted whatever might cause strong emotion in his patient, on account of the wound received at Summoughur, which having extended to the coats of a blood vessel, threatened, by gradually weakening them, to become imminently dangerous. I shall not expatiate on the resources which he possessed in himself, besides the power of communing with the sages and bards of past time, to compensate for the loss of what was then passing in the world, beyond the limits of his regality.

Malcolm Dalbracken and Gilbert Vulpine, having thus descended the hill of life, like two stones detached from a rock, starting together, frequently meeting in collision and leaping asunder, I have finally to record the manner in which they plunged at once into that gulf which receives all mortal things at last.

On the death of Guttlethorpe, Lord Surajpore, Jiger assumed the title, and Vulpine doing so likewise, was obliged soon afterwards to return to Europe on account of his health. His former visit having been nearly forgotten, his enormous fortune enabled him to live splendidly for some years at the English Court, under his new designation. But finding his ancient enemy, Lady Dallymore, in temporary disgrace, he incautiously told certain old stories which provoked her, on regaining favour, to institute enquiry that led to the discovery of all relating to the unfortunate duel at Musulaputam, and his equivocal right to nobility. Avarice having prevented him from getting another peerage before, he now sought it when too late. The announcement of a son and heir born to Lord Surajpore in the East Indies, after he had been three years in England, compelled him to flee from the resort of licentious wits, and hide himself in the country. Quite incapable, however, of living in seclusion, panting for activity and distinction, he obtained a commission to act with those who were then striving to establish Episcopacy in Scotland at the point of the sword.

Anxious as ever to display the insolence of office, and disturb Dalbracken's retreat, he affected to suspect his loyalty, and urging one of his coadjutors to inspect the castle, he accompanied him. This persecuting inquisitor was no other than the notorious Graham of Claverhouse, whom the chief of necromancers lately conjured up in beautiful drapery, very unlike

that which he wore in the flesh. Before a hostile visit could be suspected, a party of dragoons entered the court, and the two leaders, forcing their way into the study, began to break open desks, to search for treasonable papers. The first that came to Graham's hand was the patent, and a note which had accompanied it from Lady Dallymore. "My Lord," said he, "there must be some mistake respecting the owner of this place; do you see what he is,—Duke of Dalbracken, Marquis of Strathclyde, Earl of Gowandale, and Baron Dalbracken of that ilk,—and observe this, with remainder to Clara, daughter of the late Walter Vulpine of Duncogle!" Both stared in silent amazement. "This intrusion," continued Claverhouse, "may cost us our commissions. Lady Dallymore is his friend! Pray, as an acquaintance, go to *his Grace* and apologise in my name and your own for the mistake." Meanwhile Mr Wylie, acting as seneschal, approached with two armed men, and shewing that part of the document conferring extraordinary feudal privileges, conducted the offenders to the donjon. Vulpine, on giving his name, obtained a respite and an interview with the lord of the regality. He made, as ever wont, a plausible story, on which Dalbracken released him and his friend on their promise of good behaviour for the future. He granted the boon, however, with one unpalatable remark: "I am more disgusted than surprised," said he, "to see men who crouch before the frown of a King's harlot, treading with a fearless foot on the neck of their country's liberty."

They had scarcely reached the outer gate, when a scout brought them intelligence of a preaching in that wood beyond the Clyde. Each taking one-half of the troop, advanced on opposite sides against the congregation, who were heard singing the psalm. The sound of devotion ceased, and the preacher seeing Vulpine about to attack his flock, prayed for mercy on the soul of the oppressor, and called on the people to defend themselves. Several shots went off dispersing the horsemen, and Vulpine fell from his saddle mortally wounded.

The servants from Dalbracken castle arriving, carried the dying man thither, and laid him on a couch in the Indian parlour, the walls of which bore the portraits of Dara, Shah Jehan, Morad, and Suja. Dalbracken, wheeling a sofa close to him, leaned on it, mournfully watching the ebbing life of his companion in infancy. On raising his eyes, they lighted on a female form which had glided into the room unannounced, and was lifting a long black veil. Every wild emotion of his youth and endeared recollection seemed now to flash from the cloud of time on his mind, when he beheld thus suddenly the long loved features of Clara. His heart throbbed convulsively—the wounded artery gave way within his breast, and he instantly expired beside his lifeless rival.

I cannot pause to consider how Clara felt in this predicament. Kneeling between the yet warm corpses of one so nearly related to her, and one so esteemed, she closed the eyes of both, kissed her brother, took the same leave of her friend, then gazing on the stiffening countenance of the man who loved her first and best, she pressed her lips again to his, and left the chamber of death.

FINIS.

## ERRATA.

Page.	Line from the top.	
15	17	For "formally" read "fortunately."
38	3	Strike out comma after Tartar.
72	15	For "then" read "when."
106	14	For "line" read "sine."
131	35	For "deprecating" read "depreciating."
146	1	After "drinking" insert "it."
185	44	For "remained" read "remain."
347	22	For "passed" read "executed."
358	26	For "merits" read "merit."
...	34	For "Jehenara !" read "Jehanara."











